LILITH

THE JEWISH WOMEN'S MAGAZINE #19 $3.50 SPRING 1988/5748

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What the Cards Hold for Jewish Career Women

The Yiddish Lesbian Play that Rocked Broadway

Chassidic Music for Women's Ears Only

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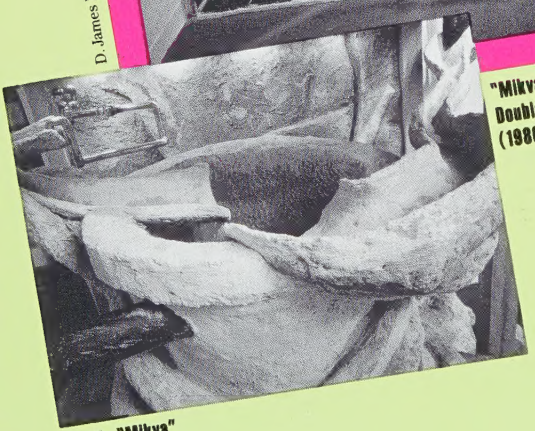
THE WOMEN'S GALLERY

D. James Dee

"Mikva: The Place of Kissing Waters and Double Doors of Ready? Ready! Transformation" (1986)



Detail, "Mikva"

"Re: Entry" (1987)

Detail, "Re: E

Mierle Laderman Ukeles, artist-in-residence for the New York City Department of Sanitation, sees her art as a way "to make visible what usually is not so visible, to find value in everyday living – which I feel is a very Jewish idea."

The life-size, two-story "Mikva: The Place of Kissing Waters and Double Doors of Ready? Ready! Transformation" (1986), represents the changing cycles in life. Ukeles, an Orthodox Jew, sees the *mikva* as a "passage place for a free act of renewal; a communal spiritual-sanitation system."

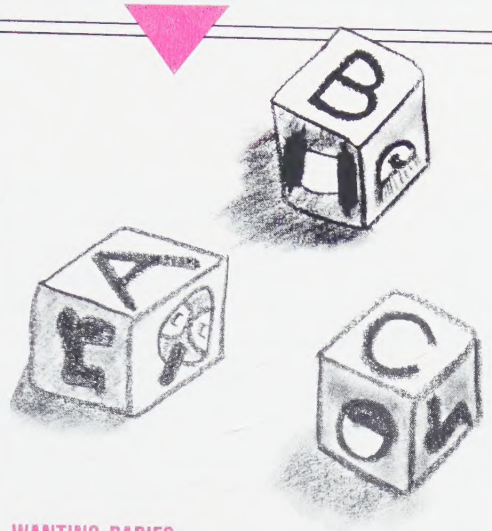
The theme of renewal is also contained in Ukeles' 72-foot long tunnel sculpture, "Re: Entry" (1987), which is built of metal pipe and scaffolding. The walls are made of recyclable materials – plastics, rubber, glass, wood, dirt, and newspapers. The taped sounds of recycling play in the background.

– Jessica Shulte

Spring 1988/5748

THE PREPARED TABLE*

Lilith Number 19



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STRUGGLING? JUGGLING? TRYING TO INTEGRATE OUR MULTIPLE ROLES
by Amy Stone

What the Jewish career woman has to contend with, and how the community (to say nothing of her significant others) can make it better. A report on the recent LILITH/American Jewish Committee survey by Dr. Rela Geffen Monson, plus six close-ups of working women.

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"GOD OF VENGEANCE"
by Kaier Curtin

The Roaring 20's lesbian play that rocked Broadway came from the pen of Yiddish writer Sholom Asch.

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MUSIC FOR WOMEN ONLY
by Chana Shloush

Orthodox women who believe that a man is forbidden to hear a woman sing say "No Men Allowed" at their increasingly popular performances.

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THE "NEW" INFERTILITY

What's new about it is that women sometimes feel as if they've made all the wrong choices. Read here about some that have worked out well:

WANTING BABIES

Shirley Frank examines what has changed in women's lives since she wrote about "The Population Panic" in LILITH ten years ago.

MAKING BABIES

Sara Nelson reports on a Jewish social worker who decided to bear a child for an infertile couple. "Very Jewish," claims the birth mother.

Arlene Agus tells us what Jewish law says about this.

GETTING BABIES

Penina and Steve Adelman in conversation about the choices they made.

A male perspective on infertility from *Rabbi Michael Gold.*

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SEEDS OF CONFLICT: SARAH AND HAGAR
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Quick takes on news from around the world: how to feed the hungry, whom to applaud for Canada's stand on abortion laws, why Ethiopian Jewish women are in prison, and much, much more.

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by Esther Cohen

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TSENA-RENA

The things you can't live without: where to go for what if you're Jewish and female.

Cover illustration by Diana Bryan

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LILITH is named for the legendary predecessor of Eve who insisted on equality with Adam: *"After the Holy One created the first human being, Adam, He created a woman, also from the earth, and called her 'Lilith.' Lilith said, 'We are equal because we both come from the earth.'"* (from *The Alphabet of Ben Sira, 23a-b)*

**THE PREPARED TABLE* takes its title from the English translation of *Shulchan Aruch,* which has long served as the authoritative code of Jewish behavior according to *halacha* (Jewish law). As Jewish feminists continue to rediscover and rework tradition, custom and practice, a new egalitarian Prepared Table will emerge. We list here selections from this evolving Prepared Table.

FROM THE EDITOR

I've often begun my talks to women's groups saying that "Jewish women are emerging as a distinctive group – different both from Jewish men and from non-Jewish women." Several stories in this issue ask, "Are they really?"

First, our cover story. The struggle to harmonize the often dissonant claims of work, family, self, community seems to be more severe for Jewish women. The recent study by Dr. Rela Geffen Monson, "Jewish Women On the Way Up," jointly commissioned by LILITH and the American Jewish Committee, grew out of our suspicion that Jewish women – because of the powerful *dual* message we've gotten as Jews both to achieve *and* to marry and have children – may have different struggles and different ways of coping with conflict than our non-Jewish cohorts.

On the poignant issue of what author Shirley Frank calls "the new infertility," Jewish women tend to stay in school longer than other women, and so we're likelier to delay marriage and/or childbearing.

Both these articles suggest programs and policies that make our problems less acute.

Speaking of things improving – the cover story in LILITH #17 on the stereotyping of Jewish women as *"JAPs"* has received nationwide coverage in the media, most recently in *Glamour* and on The Phil Donahue Show (see photo), and has inspired several national agencies to put this denigration of Jewish women on their agendas as an issue of anti-Semitism.

LILITH is on a regular quarterly schedule. With our improved frequency, more bookstores and newsstands now carry the magazine; we'd be grateful if you'd let us know which stores should be stocking LILITH.

For Canadian readers, there's a special piece of happy news. Your check (made out to The Lilith Foundation) will now be tax-deductible in Canada. Please contribute as generously as possible now that you have an additional incentive to do so. Send your checks to The Lilith Foundation, c/o Drache, Rotenberg, 81 Metcalfe St., 9th Floor, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6K7.

Cathy Blaivas

For U.S. residents: help us keep LILITH coming to you regularly by supporting the magazine. Send your tax-deductible contribution *now* to: 250 W. 57th Street, Suite 2432, New York, NY 10107.

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LINES OF COMMUNICATION

THE ELUSIVE WOMAN EDUCATOR

To the Editor:
I was very surprised to see that Dr. Elliot Spack, executive director of the Coalition on Alternatives in Jewish Education (CAJE), feels that women have made advances in Jewish education. *[LILITH #18]* While it may be true that there are more women principals than before, my observations have led me to believe that because of the current demographics, most of these positions are part-time, even those that were formerly full-time. In addition, while it may be true that two-thirds of the members of CAJE are women, it is also true that CAJE (much to its credit) is trans-professional, and its membership is comprised of teachers and lay people, as well as supervisory personnel.

If one looks at the numbers of women who are active in the Council for Jewish Education (CJE) a trans-denominational professional organization for full-time Jewish educational administrators, and at the numbers of women who are members of the Bureau Directors Fellowship (BDF), one will see a very different picture.

Only one of the 10 officers of the CJE for 1987-88 is a woman; only five out of 31 members of the board of directors are women, and there has never been a woman president. All the women's terms expire by 1988. In addition, there is only one woman on the 14-member editorial board of the CJE publication *Jewish Education*, and she is responsible for "Juvenile Book Reviews."

Of the 49 central agencies for Jewish education in the United States and Canada which comprise the 1987-88 BDF, only 10 members are women; of these, only two are in large cities, and one of them is acting director. None of the women are in Canada.

There are many more women than ever before on the "frontlines" as teachers and even as part-time principals in congregations, but on the "upper echelon" community-level, where decisions concerning policy, funding and priorities are set, it is still as I described it in a public forum at the February, 1987 BDF meeting – an old boys' network.

Rabbi Ilene Schneider
Ventnor NJ

CORRECTION

"From the Editors" *[LILITH #18]* should have indicated that the Women's Issues Committee of the Houston Chapter, American Jewish Committee, chaired by Linda May and Sherry Merfish, developed a plan to convince Houston's rabbis to denounce the negative stereotyping of Jewish women. Merfish, a Houston attorney who has lectured extensively on this subject, presented the committee's case before the local rabbinical council. Communities throughout the country have recognized the significance of this work.

Arlene Agus' title was incorrectly given in Issue #18. She is Assistant Director of the Jewish Communal Affairs Department at the American Jewish Committee.

The correct address for G.E.T. – Getting Equitable Treatment – is Box 131, Brooklyn, NY 11230.

IS GOD A WOMAN?

To the Editor:
My wife and I are long-term subscribers to your fine magazine. After all this time, I just noticed in the current issue something that may have always been there, and I would like to bring to your attention.

I was reading the fine-print explanation of the name LILITH at the bottom of "The Prepared Table" and was surprised to see the gender-specific pronoun "He" used to refer to God.

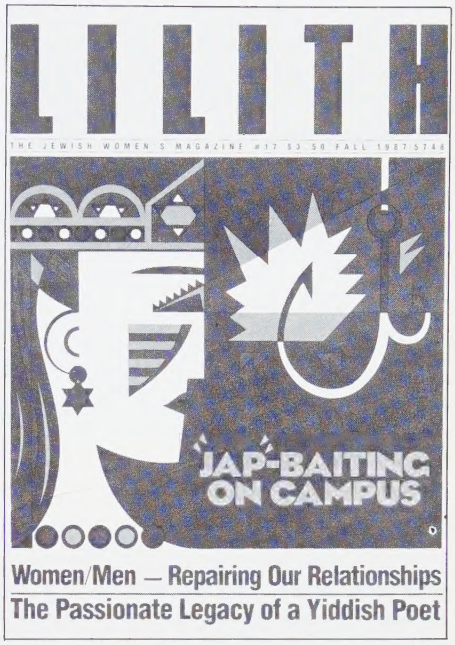
Were I to read the passage on Lilith out loud, I would probably change it to "After the Holy One created the first human being, The *Holy One* created a woman." While it may not be as precise a translation, I feel comfortable that it is an accurate interpretation.

A very important teaching of Judaism is that God is not a man; God is not a woman; God is not an animal or an object.

Jordan Wouk
Teaneck NJ

INTERGROUP PREJUDICE: JEWS, ANTI-SEMITES AND ARABS

To the Editor:
Having just returned (to Israel) this past summer from a guest professorship at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, I was interested to read Sherry Chayat's article on anti-Semitic jokes, slurs and behaviors associated with the image of the "Jewish American Princess" on American university campuses. *[Lilith #17]* I also can attest to the shocking presence of ugly, nefarious anti-Semitic graffiti at U. Penn., a school with a significant, diverse and active Jewish student population (sometimes, so I heard, called JewPenn in various circles for that reason).


LILITH
THE JEWISH WOMEN'S MAGAZINE #17 $3.50 FALL 1987 5748
JAP-BAITING ON CAMPUS
Women/Men — Repairing Our Relationships
The Passionate Legacy of a Yiddish Poet

Sherry Chayat has characterized "most young Jewish women on [American university campuses as] the daughters of parents who have 'made it'...their feeling is they've earned the right to show it off." To the extent that the appearance of anti-Semitic graffiti and related behavior reflects group phenomena, and not isolated, individual acts, we need to evaluate intergroup relations and publicize the results of our studies, as Prof. Gary Spencer of Syracuse University apparently is doing.

I should like to add that upon my return to Ben-Gurion University, I was similarly shocked and saddened by the presence of obscene anti-Arab graffiti in our university restrooms, similar in many ways to the anti-Semitic varieties I saw in the U.S. This topic needs to be addressed publicly as well. We need to be vigilant as a people, so it appears, in both areas, in order to avoid being victimized in the Diaspora and assuming the part of oppressive victimizer here. Both roles are, I believe, equally reprehensible.

Dr. Mark Gelber
Beersheba Israel

KOL ISHAH – "WOMAN'S VOICE." TRADITIONALLY, THE VOICE OF THE JEWISH WOMAN WAS NOT TO BE HEARD IN PUBLIC, LEST IT AROUSE MEN. NO MORE. THESE PAGES ARE FOR NEWS ABOUT JEWISH WOMEN, USUALLY IN THEIR OWN STRONG VOICES.

KOL ISHAH

HOW TO FEED THE HUNGRY

It may be convenient to forget about the hunger of others when one's own belly is full. Yet empathy is at the heart of Jewish *tzedakah* (charity). And at the linguistic root of *tzedakah* is the word *tzedek* (justice).

"The Hebrew concept of charity is justice," said Richard Cohen, a spokesman for the organization Mazon – A Jewish Response to Hunger.

In January, at the start of its second year of fund-raising to combat hunger in America, Mazon (which means food in Hebrew) awarded $210,000 in grants to groups that provide food and advocacy for the hungry.

Recipients were both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations across the country, from the New York-based North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry, to Prairiefire Rural Action in Des Moines, Iowa, and the Westside Food Bank of Santa Monica, California.

Mazon asks Jews to contribute to the fund three percent

of their expenses on *simchas* (joyous occasions), like weddings or bar and bat mitzvahs.

Mazon is a non-membership fund-raising organization. Contributions are tax deductible and may be made through local synagogues or by contacting Mazon, 2288 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, California, 90064, (213)470-7769.

Dr. Nechama Liss-Levinson, a clinical psychologist active in the Great Neck, New York Women's *Tefillah* (prayer) Group reminds us that contributions to organizations feeding the hungry, important at any time, are especially significant to mark the weaning of a baby.

– Toby Axelrod

"JAP" STEREOTYPE CONDEMNED

Nearly 1,000 members of the Reform movement's National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods unanimously condemned the "growing use of negative stereotyping and prejudice that demeans Jewish women." The resolution was passed at the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) convention held in Chicago late last year.

The resolution urged its member sisterhoods to discontinue the sale of "JAP" items in their gift shops, to educate members of their communities about the dangers of the "JAP" stereotype, and to work to raise the consciousness of their congregations and communities to the subtleties of discrimination in our lives.

– Reena Sigman Friedman

WOMEN CANDIDATES IN ISRAEL

If women don't get involved in Israeli politics, women's issues won't get the attention they deserve, according to the Israel Women's Network (IWN), an organization dedicated to equal rights for Israeli women. With 1988's local and national elections ahead, leaders of the organization have set out to support women candidates and raise the consciousness of the electorate.

In addition to its program for women already in office, which offers training in leadership and issues awareness, IWN is planning to give a boost to women in the running.

"We look forward eagerly to a year of intense activity," reads the IWN Newsletter #4: "A year that will finally see women take their rightful place alongside men in determining national policy and priorities and on the decision-making bodies of local and national government."

The all-out effort will be aimed at would-be politicians, designers of party platforms, lobbyists and representatives of the media. The Network is preparing fact sheets for women candidates, and a directory of accomplished women who might be urged to get involved in politics.

Among IWN's ongoing projects are efforts to improve women's status under income tax law and equal opportunity employment law, a hotline for women experiencing discrimination at work and in education, and a women's health information project.

– TA

OBITUARIES

Yochevet Reznick, a partisan from the township of Voronowa, Poland died on June 13, 1987 in Israel, where she had lived since the end of World War II.

Zelda Treger-Niselowicz, a partisan from the Vilna ghetto (see LILITH #16) died in Tel Aviv after a short illness on May 10, 1987.

NEW DATA ON WOMEN AND THE HOLOCAUST

In the twisted collective Nazi consciousness, the old saying "women and children first" was a death sentence rather than a reprieve, says Joan Ringelheim. Dr. Ringelheim, a philosopher, is writing a book about Jewish women as victims of the Nazis.

"The Burden" by Rochelle Rubinstein Kaplan

"It appears to me that more women were killed than men," said Dr. Ringelheim, who is director of the Women and the Holocaust Project of New York City's Institute for Research in History.

Women were especially endangered, said Dr. Ringelheim, because they were less likely to be seen as useful as workers for the Nazi war effort. They were seen simply as the vessel for a new generation of unwanted people.

Dr. Ringelheim observed that in the Polish ghetto of Lodz, 62 percent of those deported to a death camp were women, yet statistically women made up about 57 percent of the overall population.

In post-war displaced persons camps, said Dr. Ringelheim, 56 to 57 percent of the Jewish residents were men.

The Lodz ghetto is yet one example of a number of ghettos, for which Dr. Ringelheim has collected data to date. "These findings represent a significant pattern," she states.

Dr. Ringelheim theorizes that the Jewish Councils – the Nazi approved male leadership in the ghettos -- were aware that, in order to save Jews, they "had to save people the Nazis would be willing to keep alive." That meant able-bodied men – not women.

– TA

ETHIOPIAN WOMEN INCARCERATED

Two Ethiopian Jewish women have been held in an Addis Ababa jail since February 1987, according to Amnesty International. The two women, Heruit Tekele and a woman whose last name is Atanaw, have been detained without charges or trial in the Central Investigation Center. They are among over 30 Jewish prisoners being held in Addis Ababa and Gondar prisons.

Tekele, who is 42-years old, is reported to be pregnant, possibly a victim of rape, according to Ethiopian Jewish sources in the U.S. She has four children living in Israel and four still in Ethiopia.

Little is known about Atanaw, although her husband and three children are also being held in prison.

There are from 15,000 to 20,000 Jews still living in Ethiopia. More than 8,000 Jews managed to reach the Sudan by 1985, when they were air-lifted to Israel. *(See Lilith #18)* Emigration is officially illegal in Ethiopia.

– PG

CANADIAN ABORTION LAWS SCRAPPED

"Justice for the women of Canada has finally arrived," shouted Dr. Henry Morgentaler, after Canada's abortion laws were overturned by the Supreme Court of Canada this February. Those laws required women to receive permission from a hospital panel and, if married, sometimes from their husbands before an abortion could be performed.

Morgentaler, a Montreal-based gynecologist and Holocaust survivor who has spearheaded Canada's abortion revolution, was tried four times in the past 20 years for opening abortion clinics and was jailed on numerous occasions for defying laws he described as "inhumane." He has been the chronic target of anti-Semitic attacks by the forces that attempted to close down each abortion facility.

The court's decision, ruling on an appeal of Morgentaler's fourth trial, now virtually guarantees Canadian women access to abortion, although right-wing legislatures in provinces may impede the process.

Morgentaler has said that his experiences under the Nazis, when some women were forced to have babies while others were forcibly prevented from giving birth, shaped his strong views that women's bodies must be under their own control. **– SWS**

(Continued on Page 31)

YIDDISH – LIVE IN L.A.

Proving once again that Yiddish is not a dead language, more than 250 people attended a two-day conference entitled: "Yiddish Arts and Culture: A West Coast Conference" in Los Angeles recently.

Keynote speaker Dr. Janet Hadda, associate professor of Yiddish at University of California at Los Angeles, traced the development of Yiddish through the ages, terming Yiddish "the language through which Jewish culture is viewed."

Prof. Norma Fain Pratt of San Antonio College in Walnut, California discussed several Yiddish women poets in translation. She read from the poetry of Malka Heifetz Tussman *(featured in LILITH #17)*, and offered a personal tribute to the late poet.

Workshops covered topics ranging from basic Yiddish to Jewish folk art.

The conference was co-sponsored by Los Angeles Hillel Macor and YIVO.

– Julia Wolf Mazow

Yiddish poet Malka Heifetz Tussman whose work was read at a recent Yiddish arts conference in Los Angeles.

LILITH/AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE SPECIAL REPORT

Struggling? Juggling? Trying to Integrate our Multiple Roles

by Amy Stone

Is the Jewish woman lawyer involved in a bankruptcy case in Cleveland any different from her WASP female colleague in how she balances her personal and professional life? What about Jewish women who are psychotherapists, bankers or in business for themselves? Do they turn to Jewish institutions for support? In what ways has being Jewish and female helped them or harmed them?

"Jewish Women on the Way Up," a new study commissioned by LILITH Magazine and the American Jewish Committee, documents for the first time that Jewish women are, indeed, different from most non-Jewish career women in combining marriage and childbearing along with their careers.

This is in contrast to general surveys of executive women, where many are single, divorced or childless; the pattern is one of avoidance of role conflicts by not attempting to combine career, marriage and children.

The Lilith-AJC study corroborated an earlier finding that Jewish career women, like their non-working counterparts, are likely to marry in their early 20's and have as many or more children as Jewish women not currently working outside the home for pay. Two-thirds of the survey respondents wanted to have two or three children. Only 16 percent didn't plan to have children, higher than in the past for Jewish women but lower than for the general population.

According to the study's director, Dr. Rela Geffen Monson, acting dean for academic affairs and professor of sociology at Gratz College in Philadelphia PA, the most surprising finding was how alienated most women felt from the organized Jewish community. This was especially unexpected since most of the women responding to the questionnaire were involved with Jewish institutions. Nearly all felt positive about their Jewish identities, but half of the 944 respondents thought the community was neutral at best, and one-third considered it unsupportive.

Monson says that this finding should send up a red-flag alert to community institutions if they place any value on their pool of talent and leadership for the future. One respondent said: "I sense a paternalistic attitude from Jewish charities – the established ones. They want my money, then assume I'm male since I'm able to give, and don't use the money to help women in particular. I'm angry because I feel excluded from the profile of the Jewish community."

Monson, who has combined her own career with a 23-year marriage and the rearing of two teen-age sons, emphasized the preliminary nature of the research, which is the first on the subject.

The study was based on response to a four-page questionnaire that appeared in LILITH Magazine in 1985, and was then distributed to Jewish career women through the business and professional women's groups of Jewish Federations and the regional offices of the American Jewish Committee.

The questionnaire responses reflected the fact that Jews are the most highly educated group in the United States and that Jewish career women are as highly educated as Jewish men. Ninety percent of the respondents had

at least some college education and 60 percent had completed graduate school. Their incomes were also at the top of the scale. While approximately one-third of the respondents with children worked part-time, of the respondents working over 40 hours per week, three-fourths earned over $25,000 and 19 percent earned over $65,000. This is in sharp contrast to the national average reported in 1985 by "The *Working Woman* Report". According to the report, 60 percent of employed American women earned under $10,000 in 1982. Only five percent earned over $25,000.

About one-third of the women were currently single (never married, divorced or widowed) and two-thirds married. Of the respondents with children, about one-third returned to work within a year after the birth of their first child. The majority opted for private child care in their own homes after the first child's birth, though we don't know what other forms of child care were available to them.

The responses to the study indicated that Jewish women's preferred career path is completion of higher education, followed by entry into the work force, combined with marriage, children and continued employment. This was termed a "juggling", as opposed to a "staggering" pattern. A woman might move to part-time employment until her children entered nursery school, but this in no way altered her sense of her career trajectory.

About three-fourths of the married respondents rated their husbands as very supportive, another 15 percent as somewhat supportive. But Monson concluded from respondents' comments that "it was the responsibility of the woman to find the solution to the dilemma she was perceived as having created by changing the traditional structure. In fact, the organized Jewish community is mentioned as a potential or actual part of the solution far more often than any family members." Jewish day schools proved attractive to Jewish career women for their children because of the schools' long hours and the freeing up of Sunday for family time.

The unmarried women responding to the study were the most negative in their evaluations of the organized Jewish community. Their views also reinforced negative stereotypes of Jewish men, although of the women who had never been married, 65 percent considered marriage important or essential, preferably to a Jewish man. Forty-four percent of those who had previously been married considered it nice but not necessary to remarry.

Rela Geffen Monson

"... the most surprising finding was how alienated most women felt from the organized Jewish community."

Monson found: "For many of these women who want desperately to marry, the shortage of Jewish men and the perceived lack of community support lead to bitter conclusions."

One respondent wrote: "I feel less certain with each passing day that continued commitment to old Jewish dating mores makes sense. I find no support system in the Jewish community – merely demands on my time and money and energy."

Jewish men were perceived as more successful, more self-absorbed, more intellectual but also more prone to make good fathers than non-Jewish men. At the same time, non-Jewish men were seen as equally caring but far more "macho" and "sexy".

Monson found that the more Jewish friends a respondent had, the more likely she was to be critical of non-Jewish men and to consider Jewish men sexy. Also, divorced Jewish women were harder on Jewish men than those who had never married. The more identified as a feminist the respondent was, the more likely she was to say that both Jewish and non-Jewish men are self-absorbed.

Both married and non-married women were in agreement in considering their being Jewish less of a barrier to career advancement than being female. Fifty-three percent said that being Jewish had no effect on their careers, while 38 percent considered being a woman a negative factor in their careers.

Respondents were very clear in their priorities regarding support from the Jewish community. Married respondents wanted day care, transportation to religious school, family support groups and stress workshops. Single women wanted singles events and help in finding Jewish mates.

Speaking at a December press conference announcing the study's findings, Irving M. Levine, director of the American Jewish Committee's National Affairs Department, as well as a member of a dual career family, suggested that the very success of Jewish career women leads Jewish men to respond negatively when confronted with complaints about Jewish institutions.

"Ten more years could go by without change," Levine said. "You'll get support, not leadership, from sensitive Jewish men." In fact, he felt that Jewish values concerning success influenced Jewish career women to make private arrangements for services such as child care, instead of feeling these institutions had an obligation to help them.

Monson is looking forward to more research including studies of husbands and children in dual career families. She considers the paradigm for future definitions of "success" not just career success but family success as well.

One possibility, considering that the women responding to the study are among the most highly educated and financially successful of American career women, is that the expectations of all career women are changing. Rather than being different from other professional women, Jewish women may be in the forefront of a trend, where women no longer feel compelled to choose between career or family but expect to combine the two.

For a copy of the study "Jewish Women on the Way Up" write to:

Morton Yarmon
American Jewish Committee
165 E. 56th Street
New York NY 10022

Jewish Career Women: Six Profiles

by Amy Stone

In search of the women behind the statistics, we spoke with six Jewish career women. They range from ultra-Orthodox to culturally Jewish, from entrepreneurs to professionals in the stock market and academia. They live in the Northeast, the South and the Midwest, born in the U.S., Europe and South America. They range in age from mid-30s to mid-50s. Almost all have been influenced by the women's movement and are attempting to find a place that feels comfortable within Judaism, even if they have to create it themselves. The majority of the women responding to the survey were married with children; the women profiled here present a much broader cross-section.

While many of the women responding to the original questionnaire felt that being a woman was more of a professional disadvantage than being a Jew, one executive spoke for many of the women interviewed when she said, "You can't separate 'Jewish' and 'woman.' There's the gestalt 'the Jewish woman.'"

If there was one common bond for the women who felt both the stresses and the energy of being identified as "Jewish women," it was that their identity as Jews put them under additional scrutiny and pressure. At the same time it gave them the courage to expect more of themselves and the world.

Dr. Renée S. Lerche

Manager, Educational Relations
General Motors, Detroit

When Renée Lerche was 15, her father died of a heart attack. After that she went from religious to totally secular. She felt that God had broken His personal contract with her.

Now, 25 years later, she's an executive in the auto industry – a single, female, Jewish, Harvard PhD from New York. She feels that life at General Motors would be much easier if she wasn't driven by Judaism's ethical standards. Her mentors at GM think she's got it made. She doesn't think so.

Two years ago, Lerche was hired by General Motors to bring her adult education skills to the 865,000-employee international giant. She was hired to design, implement and evaluate GM educational systems. She was one of the best and the brightest in the field of adult literacy, having worked as a consultant to Secretary of Education William Bell as well as city and state governments from Massachusetts to Texas, author of the award-winning book *Effective Adult Literacy Programs: A Practitioner's Guide* (Simon & Schuster).

When she was relocating to Detroit, she told GM she wanted to live in an ethnically mixed neighborhood with lots of Jews, close to a synagogue, near a kosher market. They didn't know what she was talking about.

In fact, both Lerche and GM were unprepared for each other. Since the woman at GM who had recommended her was Black, the staff at corporate headquarters assumed Lerche was Black, even after she was on the job. When she mentioned she was Jewish, people wanted to know how this was possible since she was Black.

"This is a new world for me," Lerche says.

The new world is a Midwest smokestack industry with few Jews and little interest in academic values. It's a culture that Lerche has found quite open in its anti-Semitism and its assumption that any single female is fair game sexually for male executives.

At the same time, as an unmarried, observant Jew with a non-traditional approach to tradition, she has yet to find a place for herself in Detroit's Jewish life. She feels uncomfortable in the city's cathedral-like synagogues with their congregations with few single members.

As a first-generation American Jew, Lerche finds a gulf between herself and her third- and fourth-generation counterparts. She was born in Yonkers, N.Y.

Renée Lerche

Her mother was born in the Ukraine. Her father, a deeply Orthodox Labor Zionist from Galicia, brought her up believing in the dignity of labor.

She feels that, unlike her GM colleagues, she's not motivated by money. Shaped by her parents' experience in leaving Europe, she says, "Things go away. You can't get too attached to anything. It means not being so security-driven because there is no security."

What this translates to in GM values is not being a good corporate soldier. She's ready to take the unpopular stands when they're backed by hard evidence. She bucked management's plans to launch an "Adopt a School Program" at all 95 American GM plants; although it looked like a good thing for GM's image, Lerche felt the program itself did not work well.

Lerche feels that being a Jewish woman has given her the background to be courageous. She says, "I'm not wallpaper, which is both good and bad. There are always consequences."

In her personal life, Lerche has been engaged three times, always to non-Jews. In retrospect, she says she feels she picked non-Jewish men because she knew she'd never marry them. As for children, she feels at mid-career, she can "be generative without being a mother."

Laura Cohen

Commercial Loan Officer
United Jersey Bank, Jersey City

It doesn't take long to figure out why Laura Cohen is a successful bank executive – she's extremely detail-oriented. Cohen and her husband Aaron appear to have managed the perfect balancing act: they both work (Aaron is a computer scientist and manager at AT&T); and they both spend time with their daughters, ages 4 and 7.

The daughter of two school teachers in White Plains, New York, Cohen remembers, "My parents said teaching is a good job for a woman." But after a combined B.A. in management and Jewish education at Simmons College in Boston, Cohen applied to Rutgers University for a masters degree in finance.

In 1979, she was hired by the European American Bank in Manhattan; she and Aaron lived then – and still do – in New Jersey, where they belong to a Conservative synagogue which they attend weekly.

Laura Cohen grew up in a religious household. Her own father had taught her to do the cantillation for her Bat Mitzvah, and she and her sister can both function as Torah readers. In this tradition, the Cohen's elder daughter Sarah is in first grade at a Solomon Schechter (Conservative) Hebrew Day School, and Aviva, 4, goes to day care at the local YM-YWHA, where she is served kosher meals and taught Jewish rituals. After school, Sarah attends the Y too.

But, Cohen says, her decision to send Aviva there is unusual among her contemporaries. "Very few Jewish professionals send their children to daycare," she says. "Most of them have an *au pair* at home." I've talked to some of the other mothers there and we agree that the people who do it, do it for philosophical reasons," wanting their children to be taught and cared for in a Jewish environment.

Such choices cost the Cohens more than money; they have to plan their lives carefully so they can get everyone to their respective places on time every day. "My husband takes the children to school in the morning," Cohen says, "so I can get to my office by 8:30. A van comes for Sarah after school and takes her to the Y, where she stays until 5:45. Aviva is there all day. I have to leave my office precisely at 5:00 to get to the Y by 5:45." Her bosses understand the situation but, says Cohen, sometimes she senses a little resentment from co-workers who stay late. "But too bad," she says. "I do my job well."

The Cohens have no official game plan for sick kids however. "If ever one of the kids is sick – and thank God they've been very healthy – we look at each other and ask 'What's *your* schedule like?'"

Still, Cohen says she doesn't mind the routine. "I don't consider it terribly stressful." She does wish that the Jewish community in her area did more to help with later pick-up times at the Y or more transportation facilities.

Despite the fact that many parents are pushing for more facilities, it's a bit declassé, Cohen asserts, for Jewish couples to send their children to daycare. "A lot of kids just take the bus home and the household help takes care of them until their parents get there."

"The parents who send their kids to the Y are a close-knit group," Cohen says. "We rely on each other a lot," with a sense of community that she obviously hopes the children will share.

– Sara Nelson

Laura, Aaron, Sarah and Aviva Cohen

Barbara and Malcom. S. Cohen

Barbara E. Cohen

President, Miller-Druck Specialty Contracting, Inc.
New York City

It makes Barbara Cohen furious that the Jewish country club that she and her father belong to won't let them play golf together. The club doesn't allow women on the green at the same time as the men. It also makes her mad that religious prohibitions keep the Orthodox men who are her clients from shaking hands with her.

Still, she would not describe herself as a feminist. She is a woman in a predominantly male profession, an assimilated Jew who might work on Rosh Hashannah. She is, in many ways, the archetypal career woman: 35, single, working 80 hours a week, her cellular phone with her at all times.

She is very much the woman executive, standing at her Turkish-red marble desk, tapping all ten red fingernails as her female assistant phones out for two cups of black coffee for her.

Her contracting company, Miller-Druck Specialty Contracting, handles marble, stone and tile interiors and exteriors for commercial buildings. She considers her claim to fame the close to one million square feet of hand-set interior and exterior granite and marble her company put in place at Battery Park City, Manhattan's largest new office complex.

The company shares offices with Domestic Marble and Stone Corp., the company headed by Cohen's father. With its female president, Miller-Druck Specialty Contracting is considered a woman's business enterprise under New York State law, with tax breaks and special consideration as a minority contractor. Cohen considers this "terribly unfair that I can get somewhere faster, easier by what I am, not what I do."

Petite, blonde, with gray-blue eyes and a masters degree in engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Cohen categorizes construction as a tough game but plays her advantages as a woman in a man's trade. She describes a financial meeting where her father was about to sign a contract that she thought was unfair: "I grabbed the contract and said, 'There's no way I'll let my daddy do that.' I saved him one hundred grand."

Cohen adores her father and always knew she wanted to work for him, though following graduation she worked for RCA for three and a half years, building computer equipment for satellites.

She and her older sister grew up on Manhattan's Upper West Side in the apartment where her parents still live. She was confirmed at Rodeph Sholom, the marble-columned Reform synagogue off Central Park West.

Cohen considers her Jewish heritage strongest in her belief in the importance of education. The family firm gives generously to Jewish causes, and her father has been honored by Israel Bonds, but when it comes to her own charitable giving, "every nickel goes to the American Cancer Society."

Cohen credits Jewish values as a big factor in the way the business is run: "We're good with our employees. We pay for their schooling. We'll lend people money we never expect to get back."

Working an 80-hour week, there's not much time in her life for men. "How often can you cancel out?" she says. "I make time for them when I want to make time for them."

In terms of choosing between a career and family, at 35 she feels she's made her choice. The idea of having it all does not present itself as an option. Cohen says, "Either I fell into it or made the decision, but it happened a long time ago."

Dr. Evelyn T. Beck

Director, Women's Studies Program
University of Maryland-College Park

Evelyn Torton Beck embodies many of the changes that have affected Jewish life in our century. She was born in Vienna in 1933, the year Hitler came to power. When she was five, her father was taken to Dachau and Buchenwald for one year. The family managed to get him out of the camps in the early years of the war, when such rescue was still possible. In 1939, Beck, her parents and younger brother made it to Italy. In 1940, the family sailed to New York on the last boat out of Italy.

She grew up in Brooklyn, where her mother was at home while her father worked in the fur business. When Beck was 10 or 11, she was deeply involved in Hashomair Hatzair's vision of building a socialist Zionist homeland. She traces her feminism to those years.

At 21, Beck married and, with her university professor husband, settled in Madison, Wisconsin. She was married for 20 years. Beck speaks of her "typical" '50s marriage — "If you had children you stayed home. I didn't plan my kids or my career, though I always knew I wanted to be more than a wife and mother. My career evolved from my passionate interests in literature, art and social change." But her "need to maintain sanity" was the major factor influencing her return to graduate studies.

When her son was one and her daughter three, she went back to school. Ten years later she received her PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of Wisconsin, with a dissertation on "Kafka and the Yiddish Theater: Its Impact on His Work", later published as a book. She worked with Isaac Bashevis Singer when he was a guest professor at Madison, later writing an essay exposing the misogyny in his work. [LILITH #6]

Evelyn Torton Beck

Beck describes the difficulty she had, as a woman and a Jew, finding a teaching job in rural Wisconsin, even with a PhD and a book to her credit. In retrospect, she believes that as a woman, she had to excel to make it.

Beck is now Director of the Women's Studies Program and Professor of Women's Studies at the University of Maryland-College Park. In 1982, she broke new ground by editing *Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology (Persephone Press).*

She now lives in Washington, D.C., in a deeply committed relationship with a woman who is also in academia and also Jewish.

Beck says, "While I owe my feminist activism to my Jewish roots, I owe the second wave of my Jewish activism to feminist impulses." As a feminist and a lesbian, she was hit hard by the discovery that the radical feminist movement was not immune to anti-Semitism. She says, "My feminism, which includes lesbian activism, really re-activated my Jewish roots. I had put myself so far out, I needed to have all of me with me." She feels, "There's no such thing as being 'out' as a lesbian once and for all. Every single day there's the choice, which makes the parallels to being Jewish really compelling."

Beck's own acceptance of Jewish diversity took a leap when her daughter came out as a lesbian many years ago. Beck, who was still married and heterosexual says, "I freaked out." She now reflects, "My daughter helped me come to myself as a lesbian, even as a feminist."

Until we spoke, Beck had not considered that her constant push to do more might be particularly Jewish, although she believes her sense of urgency, the "If not now, when?" syndrome might well have Jewish roots. "I always feel that if something is really important, I can add it to what I'm already doing."

Rachel Berko

President, Berko Sportswear, Inc.
Brooklyn

Take the issues for career women in the '80's and overlay them on Rachel Berko, an entrepreneur who is, above all, an ultra-Orthodox woman. What emerges is that work for a traditional woman is seen primarily as what must be done to provide for the family. It has little to do with a woman's self-fulfillment, identity or struggle for equality in a man's world. Fulfillment comes from her family – her husband, five children and her parents – and Jewish life, marked by the Sabbath and the circle of the holidays.

But the contemporary elements are also there. Last October, Rachel Berko and her husband, Bernard, were named National Minority Manufacturer of the Year by the Minority Business Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce in a White House Rose Garden presentation by President Reagan. Rachel Berko qualified as a triple minority – a woman who is also Hasidic and Hispanic, although with her fair skin and turned-up nose she might be mistaken for a Midwest cheerleader.

She was born in Montevideo Uruguay, where her parents had gone into the dress manufacturing business. Both her parents were Holocaust survivors, her father from Romania and her mother from Yugoslavia.

Although her mother had worked in her father's business all the time she was growing up, Berko never thought of a career until the age of 27, when she was pregnant with her fourth child. At that point she decided her husband was never going to make enough money as an administrator in a Williamsburg Brooklyn yeshiva to support

Marilynne Herbert

Rachel Berko

their growing family.

Like most small entrepreneurs with no previous business experience, the Berkos used their own savings and borrowed from friends and relatives to start their sportswear business.

In the beginning, up against stiff American competition along with imports, shunned by buyers who did not want to do business with a Hasid, Berko Sportswear almost went bankrupt. Five years later, the business is on a sound footing, grossing $700,000 the past year and employing 27 union workers.

Unlike most couples where both partners work, there is no friction over division of labor within the home. Both the Berkos get up early – he to pray, she to do the housework. At night, she does housework, he prays and studies. "It's his vitamin," is the way she puts it. She feels guilty about not being with her children 100 percent of the time, but feels they're in good hands during the day with a woman from Honduras, who gives them warm-hearted South American care.

Berko considers her own mother her role model, although when she told her parents she and her husband were planning to buy a business, they were against it. Nevertheless, once the Berkos bought the business, her parents left Montevideo to be with them. In fact, both the Berkos' parents help out at the company.

Although both her parents and her husband would like her to be able to be at home, Rachel Berko says, "I tell my children, 'Mommy's helping Daddy. I want you to be able to go to yeshiva, give charity and buy nice things.' I'm sure I'm under stress because it's not easy being at work, going home, being a wife, mother, cook. At the same time, I do believe in women going to work, bringing money home."

Berko may, indeed, be the model for many ultra-Orthodox Jewish women. She expects to have as many children as God sends her, says that her husband is the one who wears the pants in the family, and, at the same time, she's taken the initiative in seeing that they're well provided for.

Larry Kolvoord

Pam and Bruce Reznick

Pam B. Reznick

Stockbroker and Certified Financial Planner
Thomson McKinnon Securities Inc., Austin

When Pam Reznick moved from St. Louis to Austin, Texas 10 years ago, there was only one other woman broker in town. "Now," she says, "there are too many to count."

She's been able to build her clientele by capitalizing on her male colleagues' chauvinism and by getting the kind of press coverage that professionals would gladly pay big bucks for. Reznick says, "I appeal to a certain market where my being Jewish and a woman is a positive factor."

Media coverage has come both from her Jewish concerns – as one of the organizers of the first Soviet Jewry demonstration in Austin in 1981 and an organizer of the Jewish Business and Professional Women's Network sponsored by B'nai B'rith Women – and from her special appeal as a woman stockbroker who's targeted women professionals and as the female half of a husband-wife stockbroker team.

Reznick, who was born in Shreveport La., always knew she wanted a career but didn't know it would be in the stock market until her then future husband, Bruce, got her interested in the market. Until then, like her father, her work had been in retailing.

Reznick, who's been married 15 years, was actually the first one in the family to become a full-time stockbroker. Her husband was practicing law, then moved from St. Louis to Austin, where he opened a health food restaurant. By then, Pam Reznick was a broker with a St. Louis firm. When she joined Bruce in Austin in 1977, she was hired by the local firm Rauscher Pierce Refsnes Inc. Five years later, her husband joined the same firm, and they became an informal husband-wife broker team. Recently they both made the move to the Austin office of Thomson McKinnon.

When Reznick first moved to Austin, she built her clientele through the yellow pages. She correctly assumed that the men in her firm hadn't gone to Austin's women professionals for referrals. She started by calling women lawyers, who were happy to have a woman broker for financial advice. One of her opening moves was giving seminars at the Austin Women's Center on "Bulls, Bears, Pigs: A Trip to the Wall Street Zoo" (her copyrighted title). Seven years later, Reznick and a friend organized the Jewish Business and Professional Women's Network; for many of its members, the group has turned into the one Jewish connection in their lives.

Reznick sees her husband as a major factor in her professional success, along with being in the right place at the right time. In a highly competitive business where one's colleagues are not one's friends, the Reznicks are able to refer clients to each other. They insist on working in the same firm so they don't compete with each other.

Product of a time in the women's movement that emphasized that women should not feel enslaved to a biological clock, Reznick, at 39, is experiencing the frustration of problems in becoming pregnant. During the past year, she twice attempted in vitro fertilization and will try once more this spring.

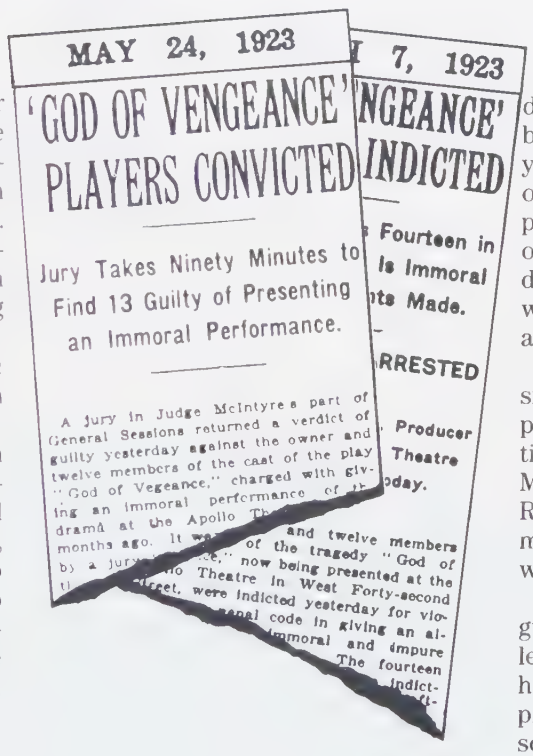
Her own experience may be emblematic for the next generation of women combining career, marriage and family. Reznick says, "We read articles about women postponing having children, that it's not a medical problem. In reality, it's not as easy to get pregnant when you're 35 or 40, and it is easy to get misled. You don't see statistics about women not being able to have children later in life. There's false hope there." ❑

***Amy Stone** is a founder and former Senior Editor of* LILITH.

ROARING TWENTIES SCANDAL:

Yiddish Lesbian Play Rocks Broadway

by Kaier Curtin


MAY 24, 1923

'GOD OF VENGEANCE' PLAYERS CONVICTED

Jury Takes Ninety Minutes to Find 13 Guilty of Presenting an Immoral Performance.

A jury in Judge McIntyre's part of General Sessions returned a verdict of guilty yesterday against the owner and twelve members of the cast of the play "God of Vegeance," charged with giving an immoral performance of it drama at the Apollo Th... months ago. It wa... and twelve members by a jury ... of the tragedy "God of ... Theatre in West Forty-second ... were indicted yesterday for violation of the penal code in giving an alleged immoral and impure ... The fourteen indict-

7, 1923

NGEANCE' INDICTED

Fourteen in ... Is Immoral ...nts Made.

RRESTED

Producer ... Theatre ...oday.

The first lesbian character seen on the New York stage was introduced by a playwright far removed from the English-speaking world. Sholom Asch — whose novels in translation from the Yiddish eventually won him international popularity among both Jewish and non-Jewish readers — was only 21 when he wrote *"Gott fun Nekoma"* — "The God of Vengeance" in 1907.

The play was seen for 17 years in productions at New York's Yiddish theatres and throughout Germany, as well as in Russia, Austria, Poland, Holland, Norway, Sweden, and Italy. It ran into trouble only after it was translated into English and moved from the Provincetown Theater in Greenwich Village to the Apollo Theater on Broadway in 1922.

"The God of Vengeance" is set in a Jewish house of prostitution in a provincial town in Poland. The proprietor naively believes he can raise a teenage daughter untouched by the sensuality of the brothel he operates in the cellar of his home, only one floor below the family's living quarters.

To insure that his closely protected daughter marries a respectable, middle-class scholar (instead of following in the footsteps of her mother, an ex-prostitute), the father buys a Torah scroll for his home. He expects the Pentateuch to protect the girl and placate the vengeful God of the Old Testament.

Once the problem has been presented early in the first act, the outcome is predictable. The surprise comes in the person of a young prostitute who sneaks upstairs to visit the daughter. Instead of being lured below by a male patron or male procurer, the young girl becomes involved in her own home with the prostitute — a possibility that never occurred to her overprotective father. As the curtain descends on Act One, the two young women, locked in an embrace, passionately kiss.

In Act Two, Rivkele, the daughter, sneaks out of her bedroom while her parents sleep to join Manke, the prostitute, for a frolic outside in the warm May rain. Barefoot and dripping wet, Rivkele and Manke come into the basement bagnio, wrapped together in a wet shawl.

Manke proceeds to seduce the young girl in a frank and sensual scene of lesbian lovemaking, the like of which has never been repeated in a Broadway play. As they snuggle closely on the sofa, Manke fondles Rivkele's breast and washes her face in the girl's loose hair.

The proprietor's daughter runs off with Manke to spend the night with her in the house another prostitute shares with a procurer. As Act Two comes to a close, the enraged father discovers too late that his daughter has escaped from the bedroom in which he had locked her.

In the final act, the procurer returns

Rivkele to her home after her mother has paid him handsomely. "Are you still a chaste Jewish girl?" the distraught father shouts repeatedly at his frightened daughter. After a night of lesbian lovemaking, Rivkele is unsure of the answer: "I don't know!" she replies.

Enraged at her evasiveness, the proprietor brutally drags his daughter by the hair to place Rivkele among his prostitutes in the brothel below. As he does so, the embittered father instructs an astonished, matchmaking rabbi who has witnessed the climactic scene to take away the Torah scroll that has failed to protect his daughter from the vengeful God of Israel.

Although Asch had been venturous enough to introduce the subject of lesbian love in 1907, it was not until 1922 that an American woman, playbroker Alice Kauser, dared to produce "The God of Vengeance" for English-speaking audiences, in a translation by Dr. Isaac Goldberg, at the Provincetown Theater, a small theater off Washington Square.

Asch's drama appealed to a wider audience than that within walking distance of the drafty avant-garde playhouse. In fact, the demand for seats during its run at the Provincetown was such that Attorney Harry Weinberger, who took over production from Alice Kauser, first moved it to the larger Greenwich Village Theater and then, to attract bigger audiences, to Broadway. It opened at the Apollo Theater on Forty-Second Street on February 19, 1923, and the *Times* reported, "It packed them in." After its English-language premiere, the playwright wrote:

"I was not concerned whether I wrote a moral or immoral play. What I wanted to write was an artistic play and a true one . . . . As to the scenes between Manke and Rivkele, on every European stage, especially in Russia, they were the most poetic of all, and the critics in those countries appreciated this poetic view.

"This love between the two girls is not only an erotic one. It is the unconscious mother love of which they are deprived. The action portrays the love of the woman-mother, who is Manke, for the woman-child, who is Rivkele, rather than the sensuous, inverted love of one woman for another."

Meanwhile, the Society for Suppression of Vice lodged a complaint against "The God of Vengeance" which denounced the drama as "obscene, indecent, disgusting, and tending to corruption of the morals of youth." In the 1920s these private citizens, with private funding, monitored the New York stage as if they were government censors.

On March 6, 1923, during an evening performance, detectives appeared backstage to inform theatre-owner Michael Selwyn, producer Weinberger, and 12 actors in the cast that they had been indicted by a Grand Jury. The 14 were charged with violation of the Penal Code which "defines the crime of presenting an obscene, indecent, immoral and impure theatrical production."

No summonses were issued and no formal arrests made. The 14 simply agreed to appear voluntarily the next morning before the judge presiding in General Sessions. When they did, they were officially arrested. All pleaded not guilty to the charge, paid $300 bail, and were back at the theatre in time to give a matinee performance.

"The God of Vengeance" was no longer being performed when the case finally went to a jury – more than two months later. At the trial, no other aspect of Asch's play was as damaging to the producer and his cast as the charge of presenting lesbian characters on stage.

Weinberger and Rudolph Schildkraut, who played the father, were fined $200 and the other cast members given suspended sentences.

The conviction of those involved in the production of "The God of Vengeance" marked the first time that an American jury had found performers guilty of presenting "immoral" public entertainment.

The guilty conviction was eventually overturned by the Court of Appeals, which held that in such a trial for breaking the Penal Code "the manuscript of a play must be allowed in evidence and anyone who has seen it [the show] at any time must be permitted to testify." This opinion has stood as a protection to all plays since 1923.

At the time of the trial, the *Jewish Daily Record* wrote:

"The entire pogrom on Sholom Asch's "The God of Vengeance" comes from ... American Jews, who are up to date with their suits and dresses, but not with their understanding. They belong to the generation which believes that the highest duty of literature is to hide the truth." ❑

Courtesy Billy Rose Theater Collection, The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center.

The cast of* The God of Vengeance, *arrested in 1922 on grounds of "impurity."

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Women's Ensemble in concert to raise money for Lubavitch Girls School in Brooklyn.

Marilynne Herbert

Making Music for Women Only

by Chana Shloush

The star performer for the evening is introduced with a fanfare of rock music. Emerging from the wings in a shimmering blue dress and white heels, she walks to center stage, takes the microphone, and breathes "Good evening, ladies and . . . (dramatic pause) ladies." More than 2,000 women in the audience cheer their approval.

The fans are hardly your typical rock concert regulars. They are grade schoolers to great-grandmothers chatting among themselves in English, Yiddish, Hebrew and perhaps a few other languages. Their record collections at home are apt to include such names as Avraham Fried, Country Yossi and the Shteebl Hoppers, and Favorite Chasidic Melodies branded with the request, "Please do not play on Shabbat or holidays." No, this is no ordinary audience, but that's the whole point. Because of their religious convictions as Orthodox Jews, these women would neither attend nor participate in a concert at which men and women appear on stage together. Today they arrange their own evenings for the pleasure and inspiration of hearing music by their Jewish sisters.

The history of Jewish women and music is at least as ancient as Miriam and the dance of the Red Sea. Because of its spiritual dimension, music has always played a central role in Jewish education for both sexes; still, until recently, there has not been much money spent on music especially for women. Recognizing that there was indeed a market among Jewish women, Negina Productions, music producers in the Orthodox community, decided to tap the market by organizing the first large-scale concert by women for women in November 1985, at the Brooklyn College auditorium. The performers were gifted and popular women who had appeared in school performances, as well as recent *baalei teshuvah* (returnees to observant Judaism) who had been professional performers. Community response was tremendous: close to 2,500 women filled

the hall that evening. Another concert in December 1986 was equally successful. As popularity grows, the producers say, the concerts will have to move to larger quarters in Queens or Manhattan. In Jerusalem, 3,000 women flooded Binyanei Haoomah, the city's largest hall, to hear the popular Israeli star Ruthi Navon in concert. Last March, the Lubavitch Women's Organization again presented Navon in a highly professional program produced and directed entirely by women.

The requisite girls' choruses or dance groups perform at each concert, but now 50-women choirs are organizing as well. The women range in age from 16 to 60 and include former professional singers and actresses as well as women from Orthodox families who sang at summer camp and school. There is "no difference" between working with the professionally trained and the untrained, says Devorah Lipson, a former student of music at the University of Western Ontario and now the director of the Crown Heights choir. "It is an easy group to work with. There is a tremendous amount of musical talent among the Crown Heights women," she remarked. And Lipson believes in the power of music. "The first Lubavitcher Rebbe said that words are the pen of the mind, but music is the pen of the soul. I find it to be a powerful vehicle for bringing unity to Jews," she said. (Indeed, you can practically feel that unity: I recognize one particular woman as the workworn mother of small children whose family seems to barely make ends meet. Tonight her face is glowing, transformed with rapture as she sings the popular Jewish melodies and medleys.)

A six or eight-piece female orchestra accompanies each concert; instruments include alto sax, flute, viola, electric guitar, bass, piano and drums. Some members of the group are not Jewish due to producers' lack of contacts with interested Jewish female musicians, but, said a Negina producer, "Our concern has been with providing quality backup music by women for the singers." Still, he indicated that Neginah would welcome Jewish applicants for future concerts.

The jokes for the evening are decidedly Orthodox Jewish female. "Do you like my hairdo?" Ruthi Navon asks at one concert, fingering her feathery shoulder-length brown tresses. "Not mine." Laughter and applause. After all,

Marilynne Herbert

virtually every married woman in the audience wears a *sheitl* (wig), hat, kerchief, or hat on top of a *sheitl*, each according to personal custom. They are extra-appreciative because they know Navon herself as a *baalat teshuvah* who only began covering her hair a few years ago.

Ruthi Navon began her career in the Israeli Army Entertainment Corps and had become a top singing star by the time she was in her early twenties. She then studied music in the United States for five years, after which she moved into musicals (she appeared on Broadway), television, international concert tours and records. In 1974, on her way to performing in the Israeli Song Festival, she was involved in a car accident in which a 21-year-old woman was killed. Realizing how short life could be, she began to seek meaning beyond the life style of a celebrity. Through friends she became interested in Chabad and was introduced to the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, who she says was instrumental in her decision to become observant. Gradually over a period of seven years she adopted a full Torah life style. Today she is married to Yossi Zmora, a Florida real estate developer, and is the mother of two young sons.

Navon talks on stage about the effects her Torah observance has had upon her career. "A performer without an audience is a *gornisht*, a nothing," she asserts. Once she had accepted the Torah's prohibition against a woman's singing in front of men other than her husband, Navon at first tried stifling herself, believing that perhaps she was not meant to sing. She was miserable. To further complicate matters, her former producer was phoning several times a week and offering her tens of thousands of dollars to perform before a mixed audience. In a letter to her spiritual guide, Navon wrote: "How can one stop a river from flowing?" The answer: "I give you a blessing to continue your successful career as a singer," wrote the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Although she expected the gates of heaven to open for her immediately, they did not. There was a year of fruitless pavement-pounding and disappointment. Ever since the first ground was broken, the demand for Ruthi's music has mounted dramatically. To date she has performed before female audiences in New York, New Jersey, Montreal, Toronto, Chicago and Los Angeles, as well as in Israel.

Navon's repertoire for these performances has consisted mainly of popular Israeli songs. One of her favorites is *Al Chomotayich Yerushalayim*, composed especially for her in honor of Yom Yerushalayim ten years ago. But her crowning number is *Yehi Ratzon Milfanecha*, the prayer for the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple. As a Lubavitcher, I have heard the same melody and lyrics hundreds of times but the quality of personal expression and improvisation Navon invests in it has stunned me to tears.

I am not the only one to experience such delight upon hearing and watching Ruthi Navon and other women — such as Penina Klaver — perform. The concerts invariably end with a standing ovation, a crescendo which leaves the audience fairly dancing in the aisles. "Jewish women have been my very best audiences...I can feel the electricity in the room even before coming onstage," Navon remarked. It is not difficult to understand why. Not only do the fans thrill to each artist's performance, but by their presence they validate and encourage her in her personal quest. In a sense, the audience is her greatest mentor. ❑

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The New Infertility

Wanting Babies

by Shirley Frank

Ten years ago I wrote an article for LILITH in which I scoffed at the "panic" that seemed to be gripping the Jewish community regarding our relatively low birth rate: "Has our 'fertility' been attacked by some previously unknown disease and taken a sudden downward plunge?" A decade later, remarkably enough, the answer seems to be "yes."

Whereas in that early issue of LILITH I observed that the lamentations about the low Jewish birth rate attributed the phenomenon to everything but the growing aspirations of Jewish women thanks to the women's movement, by now that connection between low birth rate and women's aspirations has finally been made, and we who are concerned both with the Jewish community and with women's issues find ourselves face to face with an alarming situation that we might call the "New Infertility."

Infertility is linked to delayed childbearing (or "delayed" attempts at becoming pregnant) and this is linked directly to the number of years one stays in college or graduate school. Since Jewish women, as a group, stay in school longer than any other American women, Jewish women are a high-risk group for the "New Infertility." Ironically, the most educated Jewish women, those with postgraduate degrees, have the largest family-size expectations: 2.5, as compared with 2.1 for all graduates. These are precisely the women who are most likely to be disappointed when they do try to conceive.

According to current ubiquitous though not necessarily accurate estimates, one in six couples – and some say one in every five Jewish couples – are now experiencing fertility problems. These problems are attributed largely to having waited too long – that is, beyond the early 20s – to begin the process of trying to conceive.

But how many of those with fertility problems would have had the same problems even if they had started earlier? Even before so many women pursued higher education and high-powered careers, there were couples evidently unable to have children. And they didn't have the benefit of fertility drugs, *in vitro* fertilization, and other medical wonders that might be expected to work in favor of today's infertile couple.

What they did have, however, was access to more babies than are available today. The once-large pool of adoptable babies is smaller, because of the results of other women's choices, most notably the legal right to have an abortion and the acceptability of a woman's raising a child alone.

While one cannot deny the problem and the real and intense anguish of infertile couples, we ought still at least to question whether or not we are again being subjected to yet another "women-get-back-to-the-bedroom-and-the-kitchen" scare, perhaps calculated subconsciously to frighten women in their 20s back into the safe old roles of wife-and-motherhood.

We ought also to examine the underlying premise that a person – especially a woman – is a failure in life if childless. It is nothing new for women to feel like failures, no matter how successful they are, if they do not marry and have children. What is new is that women have much more of an opportunity now to become successful in career terms – and if they make a choice then they are likely to see themselves as being to blame.

Jewish women, it is generally felt, may be more prone to feeling they are failures if they don't have children, because the Jewish community is so family-oriented. It is difficult to be

single or childless and join a synagogue or a Jewish Community Center that proudly counts its membership in terms of "families."

For those who find themselves caught between a heart-breaking infertility problem and the yearning to raise a Jewish family, there is still another option – one which, like infertility, has been there all along: adoption.

Just when there are great numbers of couples struggling with the "New Infertility," there is also a dearth of babies – at least, healthy, white, American-born infants – available to adopt. And although the number of prospective Jewish adoptive couples is thought to be disproportionately high in relation to the rest of the population, the number of adoptable Jewish babies is almost nil. Recent articles in the Jewish press indicate that Jewish parents have been steadily adopting children from Korea, Central and South America, and India.

What is the Jewish community doing to help people who find themselves in this situation and/or those who are considering or actively pursuing adoption as a means of resolving it?

Certain Jewish Family Service agencies, most notably those in Boston and Baltimore, and the Jewish Child Care Association in New York, are leading the way in providing consultation and counseling services to prospective adoptive families, although today very few babies are adopted through traditional adoption agencies.

Frequently, the reason why certain Jewish agencies have begun to offer help to adoptive families is because of the efforts of a social worker with a personal interest in the problem. Dr. Lucy Steinitz, Executive Director of the Baltimore Jewish Family Service agency, herself underwent the trauma of infertility and the arduous process of adopting a child from South America. Both she and Judy Lee, a social worker who serves as adoption consultant to New York's Jewish Child Care Association and is the adoptive mother of two small children, are eager to help other people succeed in adopting children.

Those who have adopted children universally report surprisingly ready acceptance both from their families and from the Jewish community around them. There is also a growing informal Jewish self-help network that several hundred families have joined, called "Stars of David." This organization, founded by Phyllis Nissen, a Boston-area adoptive mother, now has local chapters all over the country.

The 92nd Street Y in New York City offers informative short-term workshops for couples with fertility problems and/or those considering adoption. Eventually, it can be expected that other Jewish institutions and organizations will begin to offer similar information and support systems.

One of the issues the Jewish community will have to face sooner or later is the question of integrating into the community the increasing numbers of Jewish children who will have been adopted from other races or cultures. Very little work has been done on this, in part because the situation is, on a large scale, a relatively new one. The vast majority of Jewish children adopted from the Orient or from South or Central America are still preschoolers.

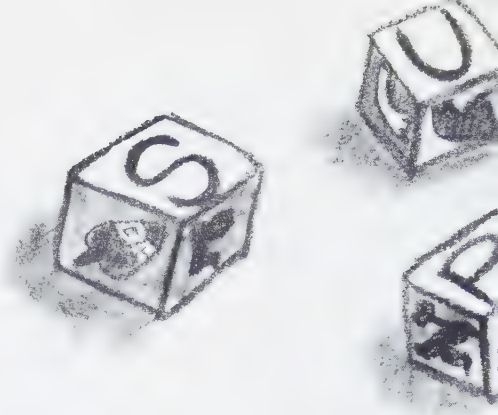
Another question for the Jewish community to consider is the issue of money. Will expensive infertility treatments only be available for the wealthy? Will adoption only be available for the wealthy?

Maybe the Jewish community should encourage accidentally pregnant Jewish women not to get abortions but to carry their babies to term and put them up for adoption.

At least some of these issues, and others, will all come together at a groundbreaking conference scheduled to take place under the aegis of the Commission on Synagogue Relations of the UJA-Federation of New York in April. According to Blu Greenberg, originator and organizer of the conference, infertility is "a Jewish community problem. It is not the way of the Jewish community," she says, "to say that the ones who have the problem have to solve it themselves. Everyone is touched by this in some way or another. Each person shouldn't have to reinvent the wheel to get to the best place the fastest.

"There should be a standing and simple and accessible address from which to get help," she continues. "This problem needs to come out of the closet. People shouldn't be embarrassed. It's important to admit you need help – and to know where to get it."

***Shirley Frank** is assistant director of communications at the National Jewish Welfare Board and editor of the* JWB Circle.



Making Babies

by Sara Nelson

Ada Greenberg, a trim, attractive Jewish social worker with a practice in Queens, New York, does not fit the profile of the typical "surrogate mother". She is 35 years old, single and did not receive payment for bearing another woman's baby four years ago.

She did it because "There was just something inside of me that told me I should carry life... [but] for many, many years, I have felt that I do not want to have the responsibility of being a mother and of parenting."

So in June 1984, after 37 hours of grueling labor with adoptive mother Lynne Schwartz-Barker in attendance, Greenberg gave birth to a son, Eamon Samuel Schwartz-Barker. Then she gave the baby away to his new mother saying, "Lynne, take your baby."

Greenberg's surrogacy began and ended long before the Mary Beth Whitehead case exploded in the media, but the issues that plagued that well-known case were absent in Greenberg's. In fact, Greenberg's surrogacy was different from most others in several important respects: she had never borne a child before; she was not married; she had no written contract with the couple for whom she bore the child; and she took no payment for her services. "My word is my bond," she emphatically states.

That bond began when a colleague of Greenberg's confided that her daughter-in-law, Schwartz-Barker, had had three miscarriages, the last of which almost killed her. The Schwartz-Barkers, who live in West Virginia, had given up all hope of bearing a child and had begun exploring other options.

After hearing this story, Greenberg wrote to Lynne Schwartz-Barker suggesting that she act as the biological mother.

Schwartz-Barker's first reaction was: "Are you crazy?" Later, after in-depth correspondence, she became convinced that surrogacy with Greenberg was a viable alternative to the couple's infertility. In fact, it was Schwartz-Barker, and not her husband, who was the first to be attracted to the idea of surrogacy. "Jerry's ego was not involved in this at all. It was Lynne who felt very strongly that she wanted to parent Jerry's genetic child," says Greenberg.

Once Greenberg met the Schwartz-Barkers, she knew the situation was perfect. "Lynne came to the same 'knowing' that I knew, that this was right for us, and that we were being presented with nothing more than a perfect opportunity," Greenberg explains. Greenberg was artificially inseminated in the comfort of her own home using a glass tube, with the Schwartz-Barkers present. Her pregnancy was uneventful, though she says she suffered from terrible morning sickness for the first three months. Though at first her parents were shocked at Greenberg's decision, they were very supportive throughout the pregnancy; she claims to have lost only one disapproving friend over her pregnancy.

Greenberg has visited the Schwartz-Barkers on several occasions in West Virginia, and like a typical mother, she boasts about what a "terrific kid" Eamon is. In fact, she states: "The truth is, we are a family.... There are very deep-seated relationships: mine with Lynne — I could not imagine being closer; mine with Jerry; my irrevocable connection with Eamon. Genetically I have a responsibility to him, on all levels."

Lynne Schwartz-Barker, left, with Ada Greenberg and Eamon Samuel

Greenberg has no regrets. She wasn't — and still isn't — ready for parenting, she says, but she was ready and grateful for the pregnancy and birth experience. "[When I was pregnant] there was a calmness and a singular sense of satisfaction with life and such a sense of being special. So special, special in a way that I'll never know again."

Now a counselor for infertile couples and an active proponent of surrogacy, Greenberg sees her choice as a big step forward for feminism. "I am pro-surrogacy, absolutely, unequivocally, whether it be for money or not for money, whether it be a matter of becoming involved in impending legislation. I am [also] pro-adoption, pro-abortion. I am pro-the-right-to-choose."

An articulate, sometimes outspoken woman, Greenberg has had to address many issues surrounding her surrogacy, not the least of which is how she, as a feminist, feels about the well-documented rebukes of other noted feminists, particularly Phyllis Chesler, who has said that surrogacy is just the latest manifestation of a "very ancient patriarchy that gives men rights over the bodies and lives of women."

Greenberg, citing that it was the mother, Lynne, who was at first the most enthusiastic about the prospect of surrogacy, disagrees; furthermore, since she took no money from the Schwartz-Barkers, *by choice*, the notion of slavery seems ludicrous to her. Instead, she sees a connection between her desire to be a surrogate and her Jewish identity.

"The Jewish people have a zest for living, for life, for survival. I mean, the State of Israel wasn't born just out of a needing for a land, it's a kind of sur-

"The Jewish people have a zest for living, for life... My surrogate relationship isn't any less than that. It is a wanting, a need, a sense of survival."

vival, it's a special, emotional, deep-seated psychological wanting to survive, to be a part of this world, to have a place. My surrogate relationship isn't any less than that. It is a wanting, a need, a sense of survival. It is making a contribution, having a sense of knowing that there is something more I have done than just walk the earth, earn a living and counsel people.... It's something much more – the gift of life."

The fact that Lynne and Jerry Schwartz-Barker are an intermarried couple – Jerry is not Jewish – was not a problem for Greenberg because, she says, they both have a religious regard and respect for the dignity of life and want Eamon to have the same. "That is the pure sense of Judaism anyway," she adds.

Valid as these thoughts may be, the question must still be asked: how can a woman part with an infant she has carried in her womb for nine months? Greenberg admits that she suffered some postpartum depression, and that she wept in the weeks following the birth, but, she claims, "these were not feelings of 'I miss my baby.' I never viewed this child as mine. I viewed him as the most serious responsibility I'd ever had in my life up till then [but it was] time-limited."

"Hopefully," she said, "Eamon will consider me a good friend. He will be told" about the surrogacy when the Schwartz-Barkers feel he is old enough to understand.

In this, as in all other areas, Greenberg defers to the people she calls Eamon's "real parents." They alone will decide how to raise him, how or whether to educate him religiously; they will make all decisions about his education and his life. And while she concedes that she would offer advice if asked, Eamon is to her the adored child of other people, not her own son.

Luckily, Eamon was born healthy, but, Greenberg says, she and the Schwartz-Barkers had agreed that as long as she took good care of herself during the pregnancy – did not smoke or drink and tried to live as stress-free a life as possible – they would assume all responsibility for the child, even in the event of some kind of genetic defect.

"The truth of it is that Eamon was conceived out of love of three people, rather than two, as other children are usually conceived. We can only hope that Eamon will come to a place where he can understand the kind of love and the nature of the relationship of the adults and the importance of him in our lives and the significance that he holds for us. As Jews, when we toast, we say, 'to life.' And Eamon is a toast to life."

Sara Nelson *is a New York-based freelance writer whose work appears frequently in many national women's magazines.*

Surrogacy in Jewish Law

by Arlene Agus

In considering cases of so-called *synthetic sex* (artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization) and *synthetic babies* (genetic engineering), Jewish sources are cautious but encouraging. Yet there is a surprising consensus among both classical and contemporary Jewish thinkers, from Orthodox to Reform, discouraging *synthetic families* (surrogacy). One is struck by the consistent reference to Biblical and Rabbinic citations – from Talmudic through Medieval and even to the modern – which are used to identify appropriate precedent and to define complex new realities by traditional categories.

Essentially, while these sources promote the beneficial uses of science to overcome infertility – which is considered to be a disease rather than a destiny – they find surrogacy poses undue psychological and physical risks to the parties concerned without managing to ensure the rights of the child.

Considerations center on four principles: family integrity, human dignity, rights of the child, and contract legitimacy.

Family Integrity: A delicate dynamic balance within a family unit is seen by tradition to be essential to human need. Elements in this balance would be the ability to define and delimit the family, to forge secure family bonds and clear personal identities, and to preserve the sanctity of the marriage of the natural father and, if she is married, the natural mother. Surrogacy bears with it possibilities of wrong-sperm pregnancy, arousing jealousy in the non-genetic parent or in half-siblings of either family, and even the psychological dynamic of adultery.

Human Dignity: Jewish concerns here are: *oshek* (economic exploitation), in this case preventing exploitation of poor women by the rich; insensitivity to the birth mother's sacrifice in surrendering a child; institutionalizing the devalua-

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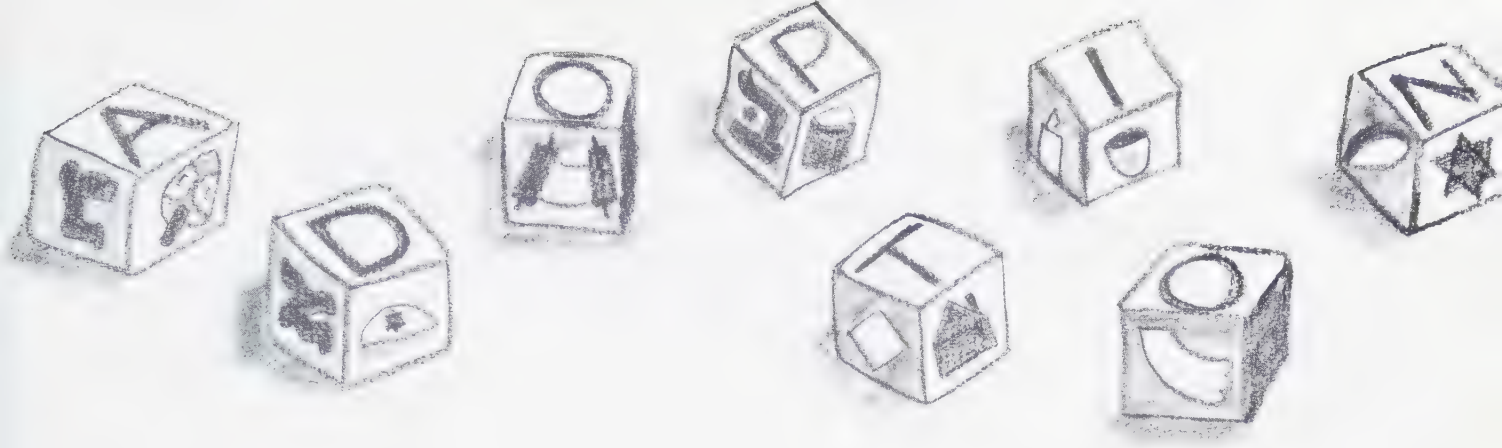


Getting Babies

by Penina and Steve Adelman

Infertility. When a childless couple discovers that conception by traditional means is impossible, the partners must ask themselves some difficult questions.

Here is the real-life story of Steve and Penina Adelman's confrontation with infertility, and their solution.

Penina: Five years ago, the words "infertility" and "adoption" belonged to a language I had never needed to speak. However, after countless temperature charts, too many surgical procedures, ultrasounds, hormone injections, medications and lost pregnancies, those words left my lips so easily they surprised even me. Not to mention the times my husband Steve and I awakened in the hour before dawn with the recurrent nightmare of dying childless.

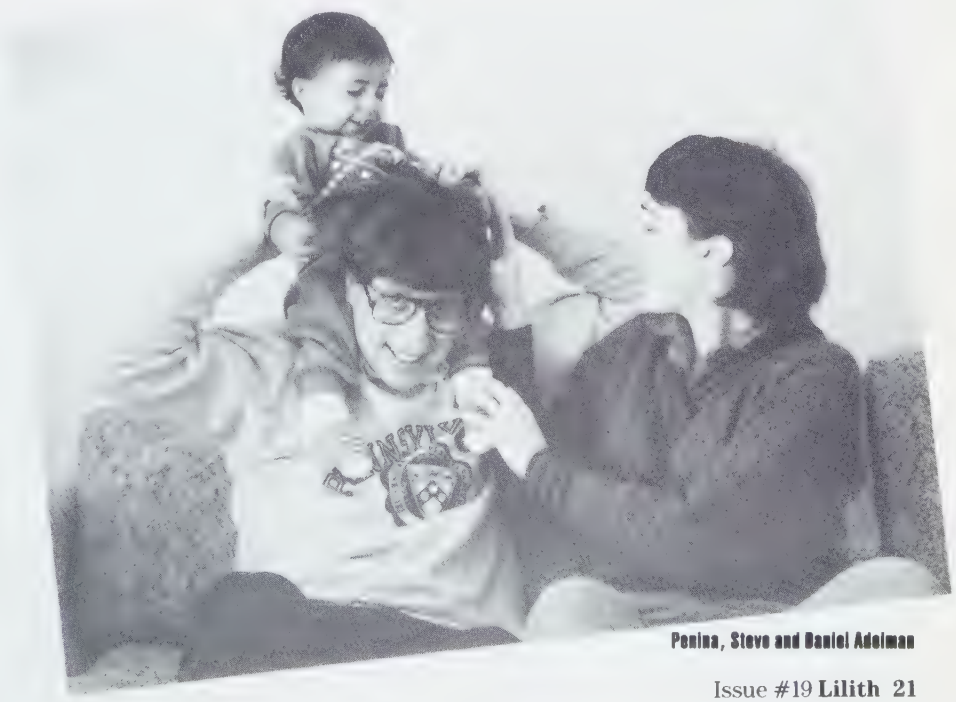
Steve: In the city neighborhood of Philadelphia where I grew up, we thought that the single woman living in the duplex three doors away was a witch. The one childless couple on my block was viewed by all as a pair of child-haters. The adopted kid who lived across the back driveway was an only child; my parents spoke about him and his family in hushed tones. As I was growing up, the message became clear: When the time comes, you will get married to a nice Jewish girl and have your own nice Jewish children. The experience of infertility challenged my very identity as a man. I was used to being able to achieve anything I set out to achieve.

Penina: For my entire life, I had been under the illusion that one day I would become pregnant, that pregnancy would be the fulfillment of my womanhood. Then, I had my first ectopic pregnancy, a few weeks before Rosh Hashanah five years ago. I lost not only my baby, but the fallopian tube in which the fertilized egg had implanted. Suddenly, I had to make myself understand that I might never bear a child.

I searched the Jewish texts to find a way to mark the loss of a pregnancy but found none. In the past, the Bible had often provided me with clues as to how my foremothers had handled the challenges in their lives. I turned to Hannah in the Book of Samuel because she was so articulate about her longing for a child. Every day I sat down and studied Hannah's story, thinking about it from every possible angle: How could Elkanah still love her better than Peninnah, his fertile wife? Where did Hannah get the strength to persist in her quest for offspring? This daily study session was my way of saying kaddish for the baby who had died.

Steve: Like many prospective parents, I yearned to improve upon my own childhood experiences through my child. I had been traumatized by a number of anti-Semitic episodes; I longed to instill in my own children a fundamental feeling of strength and security about being Jewish.

Penina: We had worked so hard to reclaim the Sabbath as a day of rest, to learn to speak Hebrew and to reaffirm our connection to the Land of Israel. But now we had no one to whom we could hand the fruits of our labors.



Penina, Steve and Daniel Adelman

"The most difficult hurdle I had to clear was accepting that when I looked at my baby, I would not see hints of myself there."

Steve: While my wife repeatedly sacrificed her body and spirit on the altar of the "new reproductive technology," I decided to set the 2-year Colombian adoption process in motion and to express my desire for attachment to a child by becoming a Jewish Big Brother; this experience demonstrated to us that we might be able to disassociate parenthood from the biological imperative to procreate.

Penina: Deciding on what sort of child to adopt, I came face to face with my own racism. The most difficult hurdle I had to clear was accepting that when I looked at my baby, I would not see hints of myself there. As my child grew, I would not be able to claim that strengths and weaknesses of mine were at work. He would never look like a Jew whose ancestors had emigrated from Vilna. I found that there were degrees of differentness, some with which I was comfortable and some with which I was not. I have dark hair and dark eyes. I could picture bringing a brown-skinned child of South American origin to the supermarket with me, but not an Oriental or black child. That felt like being part of an advertisement for adoption, and I was not ready for it.

In March 1986, Steve and I attended an orientation meeting at the Florence Crittenton League in the Boston area. We walked into a room where about 15 couples sat talking in the soft tones usually reserved for funerals. A man and woman, smiling widely, walked in carrying a frisky dark-eyed baby. The atmosphere in the room was suddenly more like that in a nursery. People were talking animatedly, laughing and gurgling and cooing to the baby as he floated by in his mother's arms. Suddenly I realized: Not too long from now — after a home study, some bureaucracy and a trip to Bogota — a child like this could be mine.

Steve: We survived the inspection of our lifestyle and we survived the bureaucracy and we survived the wait. Finally, eleven months after our initial meeting with the Crittenton people, we received a call: A Colombian boy had been born and he was available for adoption. Our excitement was tempered by the dream-like unreality of the situation — we were going to be the parents of an unseen infant in an orphanage in Bogota, Colombia.

For years, I had scrupulously avoided the baby sections of stores, yet in the days before our trip, I rushed down the aisles in search of hooded towels and blanket sleepers — all the trappings of babyhood that had always hurt me to see.

Penina: The morning after we arrived in Bogota, we drove to the orphanage to pick up our son. In a small room decorated with crucifixes, rosaries, flowers and blessings in Spanish, we waited to meet Daniel. We shared this, our delivery room, with three other American couples also waiting to receive their children.

Finally, the director entered the room with our baby. I had stepped in the Sea of Reeds and the waters parted. The nuns gave me a bottle. I pointed it toward my son's mouth and he gulped the nipple like a very determined little fish.

Learning how to wear my new status as a mother while sojourning in a strange land made both motherhood and Colombia seem like perfectly natural states to be in. After all the struggles with infertility, it would have been too much of a jolt for Daniel to come right into our home. The journey helped. It was a real Yetsiat Mitzrayim, Leaving the Narrows of Egypt.

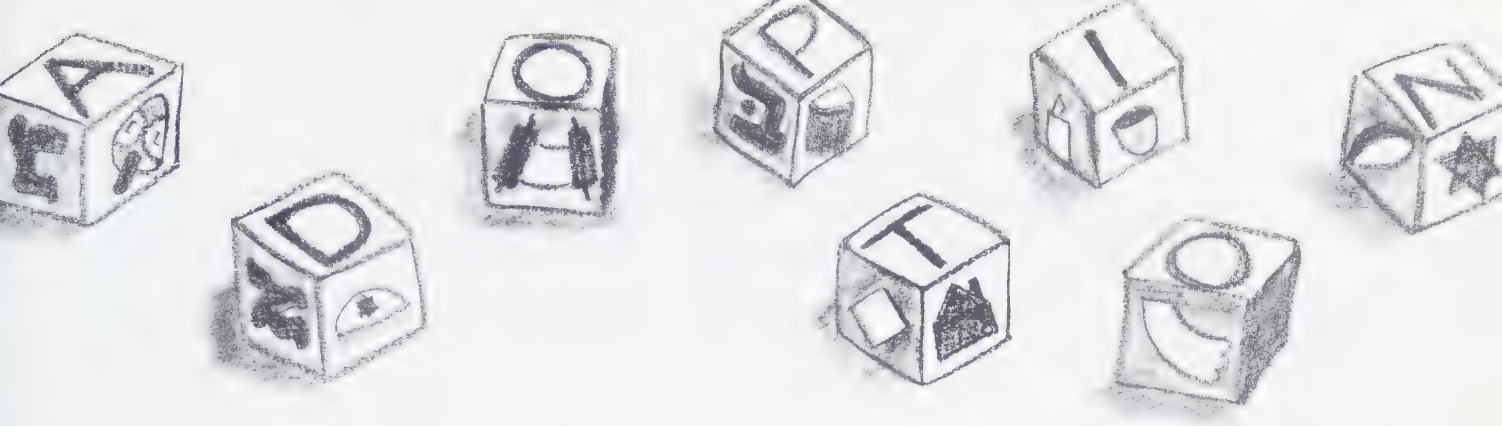
Steve: Being a parent to Daniel is the most absorbing activity I have ever undertaken. Fatherhood has rooted me in the present, releasing me from the sadness of the past and the worries of the future. Our here and now life with Daniel is enormously satisfying precisely because it is unremarkable. I can think of no greater joy.

Penina: The High Holiday season has come around again but instead of pain for my lost child and dread about our infertility, I am experiencing real joy. I have a son in whom — blood relation or no — I see and hear myself as a child.

I am realizing that I have found the way to heal myself from the infertility. I can be a mother even if I never give birth to my children from my own body. A family is a family no matter how it happens.

And like any family, Steve and Daniel and I have our own rituals. One of my favorites is taking Daniel in my arms and walking with him around the yard, letting him touch leaves and flowers and see the new ones growing. Today, I notice something I have never seen before, although it must have been there for quite a while. There, in the black stump which was once part of the trunk of a still-thriving maple tree grows a 12-inch pine sapling. I look around. Sure enough, the maple has a pine for its neighbor. The pine could not find enough room to grow a little one and so cast its seed where there was space, on the maple tree's vacant, rich stump. A Tree of Life.

Penina Adelman *is a writer, social worker and author of* Miriam's Well. ***Steve Adelman*** *is professor of psychiatry at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center.*



Getting Babies

by Michael Gold

I am a rabbi of a traditionalist bent. I am also an infertile man, and the adoptive father of two children. These various aspects of my identity have colored how I view marriage, masculinity, fatherhood, and God.

When my wife and I were married, we agreed that we wanted a large family. We spoke about four children. Our only disagreement was over how soon to begin. I was ready to try to conceive a child immediately; my wife believed that a couple needs at least a year to work on their marriage before considering pregnancy. I realize now that she was right, yet little did I know that all those birth control pills would be wasted.

Still, that first year was important. Jewish tradition sees two major purposes of marriage. The primary one is companionship and the secondary one is procreation. No couple should ever pursue the procreation part of their marriage until they have put time into the companionship part. Thank God my wife and I did that.

After one year, we threw the birth control pills away and began our quest to have a family. We assumed that it was automatic, the next step in a smooth continuum of school, courtship, career, marriage, and children. Several months went by and nothing happened.

Finally, with the strong suspicion that something was wrong, we set up an appointment at a major infertility clinic. Like most men, I assumed that they would find some medical problem with my wife. After all, wasn't infertility a woman's problem? Reflecting this bias, traditional Jewish law *(halacha)* frowns on sperm tests for men, and permits them only as a last resort. The doctor recommended a sperm test for me, which I reluctantly agreed to. She then came back with the news; my sperm count was so low and my sperm quality was so poor that there was no chance my wife could get pregnant.

There seemed to be little in traditional Judaism to comfort us. We read the Biblical stories of God punishing a woman by closing her womb. We read the Talmudic law requiring a man still childless after 10 years to seek another wife with whom to fulfill the mitzvah of "be fruitful and multiply." We read modern responses calling artificial insemination by donor an abomination and *in vitro* fertilization immoral. We felt betrayed both by God and the long rabbinic tradition which claims to speak in His name.

Unfortunately, I was viewing Judaism very superficially. Since then, I have explored those sources in the Jewish religion that can comfort and support an infertile couple. For example, infertility in the Bible is usually not a punishment but, on the contrary , an affliction of the most pious people. None of them passively accepts their infertility. They pray, they seek intervention of holy men, they try a surrogate mother arrangement, they adopt. The lesson of Judaism seems to be that passivity is not a virtue: I do not need to accept my infertility as God's will and therefore do nothing.

As for the 10-year limit on a childless marriage, I noticed that historically it fell out of practice. Jewish tradition seems to place greater importance on the love, companionship and permanence of marriage, even if that marriage produces no children.

I found little to support the rabbinic rulings on the forbidden nature of

Adoption

Baltimore Jewish Family Service, 5750 Park Heights Avenue, Baltimore, MD, 21215. (301) 466-9200. Provides consultation and counseling services to prospective adoptive families.

92nd Street YM-YWHA, 1395 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY, 10128. (212) 427-6000. Offers workshops for couples with infertility problems and those considering adoption.

Stars of David, 24 Lisa Lane, Reading, MA, 01867. A national support network for Jewish adoptive families, with chapters in 21 states.

Infertility

Mt. Sinai Infertility Information Service, 1 Gustave L. Levy Place, New York, NY, 10029. (212) 650-5994. Provides information on options available to those with infertility problems.

Pregnancy Loss Peer Counseling Project at the Jewish Women's Resource Center, National Council of Jewish Women, New York Section, 9 E. 69th Street, New York, NY, 10021. (212) 535-5900 ext. 16. Offers telephone counseling and group sessions.

Resolve, Inc., P.O. Box 474, Belmont, MA, 02718. Nationwide referral and information service.

"I have decided that in Judaism, masculinity is ultimately proven not by siring a child but by raising and teaching that child."

unconventional medical techniques in Talmudic literature. For instance, many rabbis (not just Orthodox) had forbidden artificial insemination by donor (AID). Yet, there is a Talmudic precedent for a child conceived in a manner similar to artificial insemination, wherein the child is considered legitimate. The ancient law of Levirate marriage sets a precedent where one man's seed is used to conceive a child in the name of another man. There seemed to be room for a permissive ruling on AID and other new techniques of conception, particularly where a mitzvah as important as "be fruitful and multiply" was involved. Judaism teaches that if the world is not perfect, our job is to perfect it.

My wife and I were each other's best friends, and we decided that we would do whatever it took to have the child we wanted. Our goal was a child; we were less concerned with how that child entered our family.

I went through two rather extensive surgeries. They were partially successful, and our hopes were raised again. Yet still my wife did not become pregnant. To our dismay, we discovered that she had hormonal imbalances, and that it was unclear whether she was ovulating. Now it was her turn for drugs, daily thermometer checks, and finally surgery. Still, there was no pregnancy. The medical option did not work for us.

At the height of our medical treatment, we received the most exciting phone call of our lives. A teenager was pregnant in the south, and her attorney was searching for the right adoptive family. Were we interested? An immediate decision was needed. A number of thoughts occurred as we discussed the issue. Could we afford it? Were we giving up on pregnancy? How would we explain it to our parents, who still had no idea about our infertility problems? Yet, we knew these opportunities are rare. We said "yes," and two months later our son Natan Yosef entered our lives.

As we brought the baby home, we knew that there were issues that must be faced. Most important, the baby's birthmother was Gentile, requiring a formal conversion. When our son was four months old, we did a symbolic circumcision, immersed him in the mikvah, and gave him a Hebrew name. We then celebrated his arrival with a huge kiddush in my congregation. Three years later, we celebrated again for the arrival of our daughter.

The adoption of our two children was the most wonderful thing that ever happened in our family, not only for my wife and myself but for the four grandparents, the various uncles and other relatives. Yet, once again Jewish tradition had little to say that could guide us.

In exploring Judaism, we discovered that there is great emphasis on bloodlines. Even now, when I chant the grace after meals and come across the part where I bless "myself, my wife and my seed," I cringe. These are certainly my children, but they are not my seed.

My son, now five, has spoken as young children are wont to do about marrying his sister. I tell him that it is forbidden, although I know that by Jewish law it is permitted. After all, they are not blood relatives. In fact, by Jewish law, even their conversion was conditional upon their accepting Judaism at the age of majority; at 13, my son can protest his infant conversion and retain his Gentile status. I know that if I were a Kohen or Levi, he would still be a Yisrael. I know that traditional Judaism has laws of guardianship but not of adoption. There is not even a word for adoption in classical Hebrew.

I have explored Judaism, searching for strands of the non-biological, such as this beautiful statement of *aggada* (legend): "The one who raises a child is called the parent, not the one who gives birth." For me, one of the most meaningful rabbinic teachings says that if one has a choice of rescuing or redeeming a father or teacher, the teacher comes first. "For the father only brings a child into this world, the teacher prepares him for the world to come."

I have decided that in Judaism, masculinity is ultimately proven not by siring a child but by raising and teaching that child.

As strange as it sounds, there are times I thank God for my infertility. I believe it has made me a better Jew, a better husband, a better father, a better man.

I have become a better Jew in that I have confronted my tradition and found those strands which can give me comfort and strength.

I am a better husband in that I have realized what is most important about my marriage. To quote a term in the marriage blessings, my wife and I have become "reim shuvim," loving friends.

I have become a better father in that I have realized that the essence of fatherhood is not biological but spiritual.

I have become a better man in realizing that infertility has nothing to do with masculinity. It is unimportant whose seed created these children; what is important is whose love will sustain them. ❑

Rabbi Michael Gold *is the rabbi of Beth El Congregation in Pittsburgh, Pa. He is the author of the recently released* And Hannah Wept: Infertility, Adoption and the Jewish Couple *(Philadelphia: Jewish Publications Society, 1988).*

Seeds of Conflict:

Sarah and Hagar

by Marjorie Hirshan

And this is the line of Terah: Terah begets Abram, Nahor and Haran with Emtelai, and with Ednah he begets Sarai in Ur of the Chaldees. Terah prospers as his children grow and Abram delights in the keen intelligence of his young beautiful half-sister, Sarai, who longs to read and write like the male children. And Abram teaches her, and, defying Terah and King Nimrod, he brings her his new iconoclastic philosophies about one omnipotent, omniscient God.

Abram and Sarai are wed. But Sarai is barren, she has no child. She teaches alongside her husband; she weaves, sews, plants, nurtures the poor, until she becomes a legend in the land. But still she has no child. Abram, inspired by his new God, leads them to Canaan, the promised land.

There is a famine in Canaan and the tribe of Abram goes down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine is severe. Because of Sarai's extraordinary beauty, she is presented as Abram's sister to save his life. The Pharaoh sees her beauty and takes her for his harem. Despite her protests, he loves her and gives her his daughter, Hagar, as a handmaiden to teach her to walk in Sarai's ways. The tribe returns to Canaan and the relationship deepens between Sarai and Hagar. Ten years pass.

Sarai remained barren as the arid stretches of desert wasteland....

In despair, secretly she resorted to forbidden white magic for fertility, boiling and eating the mandrake's large forked root that resembled a human body.

Often she awakened in the cool desert nights in a sweat of fear that Abram would cast her aside, knowing how deep was his desire for a son. Crawling off her couch in the darkness, she groped for a change of dry clothing, all the while praying that she would become fertile. For him.

"Only one son. That is all I ask, O God of Abram. One son to begin an infinitude of people to serve You. Why do You withhold my heart's only wish? I have served You well."

And she wept as she pulled a dry tunic on over her head.

When they were together, Abram still loved her tenderly and passionately, but she knew well the tribal law permitting that a sterile woman could be served a bill of divorcement at any time, to which she had no recourse.

And there was nothing that Abram wanted more than a son.

The morning was bright blue and breezy, the kind that she always had found invigorating, but already she was tiring. The women were in the open-sided tent at the edge of the encampment where they created the fabric for the tribe's clothing. All the retting and breaking of the flax had been completed.

"Enough for one morning," Sarai announced, wiping the beads of perspiration from her upper lip as she put the combs away. "Let's go back to our tents."

They passed the servants who were busily baking and circles of heat were winding around the coals on the ground, scorching the sand.

Only Hagar looked cool. Her hair was perfectly in place and her thin fingers effortlessly kneaded the meal into flat, round cakes. Hagar, always imperceptibly aloof, did everything easily and gracefully.

Swiftly she had learned and responded to Sarai's wisdom, but on Abram's heroic stories she had thrived like a new fig tree sprouting lush, green fruit. His dialogues with God, his personal victories, and mostly his rebelliousness seemed to arouse her spirit. She would listen to him tell how he smashed the idols of Nimrod and she appeared infatuated with his words and his voice. Her body seemed to thrill to the story.

Sarai heard none of the handmaidens' chatter; intently, she studied Hagar's movements as she reached for a basket, and placed it on her head in one swift arc. She was off to the orchards for the picking and crushing of the olives, on her way to her second assignment.

As Hagar passed, her ankle bracelet catching specks of sun as she walked, Sarai stood aside, but her eyes didn't leave the young Egyptian's bronzed body, firm and supple under her brightly striped dress. It sent out the heavy aroma of myrrh and hyssop, filling Sarai with faded memories of her own sensuous bath in the Pharaoh's golden palace. She felt old and colorless, not at all remarkable as her people believed her to be, and much less a princess than Hagar.

The unseasonal heat, too intense and stifling for this time of the year, depressed her even more. She searched in her mind for that magnificent palace of gold and carved stone when time was new and green, and Hagar's father, the Pharaoh, had found her to be so desirable.

In a kind of melancholy compulsion, her eyes followed Hagar as she glided along the path. Her young body could bear sons easily, agile and strong sons, like Egyptian princes. She would have to offer her to Abram.

Her breath caught at the thought and her body glistened with a sudden outpouring of sweat, even as her hands felt icy and clammy as she touched them to her cheeks and her forehead.

It was an ordinary, accepted custom to offer your maid to your husband to have a child to build up your house. Why did the idea feel brand new and so sharp-edged? It made her whole body ache. And God, how she wanted to weep.

The heat grew even more intense, as if the sun cried out to her to notice that it burned with compassion.

She headed for her tent to hide from the world.

If only it were cooler, she could think.

The afternoon turned white-hot and glimmered like metal until, slowly, it melted into the coolness of evening. Its quiet hush brought her no relief.

Hagar entered the tent carrying a pitcher of fresh water for the evening meal. Sarai's cheeks were flaming as she watched Hagar's graceful movements. She was learning forward, carefully setting the waterjug on the table precisely where Abram liked it. Sarai saw how young and firm her breasts were.

"Hagar, come here to me," Sarai called in a strange, high pitched voice.

"What is it, Sarai? You look..."

"Hush. Just come here to me." Sarai's hand went up to her mouth as Hagar moved closer, searching to read her face. The Egyptian was puzzled and on the verge of upset seeing this unknown agony in the anxious eyes of her mistress. Unknowingly, she pulled at her beads.

"Tonight," Sarai swallowed, "you will go to Abram's tent and... lay with him." She was trembling and her voice was deep and husky as she held Hagar's forearm. "I will never be able to give him a son. You go to him."

Hagar turned mute but her face shone like a moon aglow in a black, velvet sky. She didn't understand her sudden, joyous feelings but she turned from Sarai consumed with such happiness that it carried her all the way to the tent entrance, floating like one who has had too much wine. She checked herself, tiptoed back as if fearful that any noise would break this spell and she put her face up so close to Sarai's that her lips were brushing her mistress' ear.

"The covenant," Hagar whispered, her chest heaving as if she had run all the way home from the outer hills. "Abram will surely want the covenant to be fulfilled through you."

Elisse Goldstein

"Go to him, I say. His God has spoken only to him," Sarai continued. "His God has said that Abram's descendants will be as plentiful as stars and sand and dust." She stopped and pressed her hands on her temples. "God has never shown Himself to me, Hagar. The covenant is with Abram and *his* children. Go to him, while I have the strength in me and the love for him to send you."

Hurriedly, Hagar left, flinging the doorflap open in her haste, letting in silver streaks of moonbeams that stretched across the floor in even rows, like painted, iridescent stripes. Sarai stood alone, every muscle in her body pulled taut, peering through the doorway at the path to Abram's tent. Already Hagar was nowhere in sight.

Striped with silvery moonbeams, like a wounded tigress she lay down on her rug and curled up into a taut foetal ball as if to ward off great, physical pain. Pressing her hands over her ears, she locked her eyes shut to obliterate all sensations from her surroundings — the hot aching night, the dry desert, even fertile Egypt.

Why couldn't she rise up like Abram against the mores of society?

Give him your maid! That was a custom to claw out a woman's heart.

He had stood up against Terah; he had smashed icons, laws and idols. How could he love her? She couldn't even squash out this flaming agony that burned within her as she pictured his strong arms around Hagar. And Hagar's young, pink mouth, her silky skin, the graceful curve of her arms....

Sarai's body ached along with her heart.

She had always gone to him so willingly and openly whenever he wanted her and he had always found delight in her and in their love, staying the whole night to be with her. She could feel his firm thighs against her now, his jaw against her cheek.

And he had to be with Hagar.

She couldn't cry. All night, she lay there on the rug, her body streaked with moonbeams.

In hushed whispers she prayed that Hagar would become pregnant.

Then she wished as hard as she could that she wouldn't.

Hagar's body grew round and full almost overnight, her tight breasts bursting forward like ripe pomegranates and her swarthy skin glowed with a new brightness as fresh milk under moonlight.

Anger and scorn sprouted in Hagar. She carried Abram's child and that elevated her to the position of second wife. She made the transition easily, smoothly, and too eagerly. She revelled in her new rank, flaunting it by issuing orders

like the headwife in an Egyptian harem....

Sarai saw that Hagar despised her.

The Egyptian wore her feelings openly, like a new, brightly colored robe and the more she let them show, the stronger they grew, as if exposure to sunlight and air made them thrive. Her years of devoted service she counted as payment in full for everything Sarai had ever done for her. Her royal blood ran hot; it bubbled in fermenting angers and vintage dreams.

For my father's lustful dream, she thought, I was delegated to second-class female. A handmaiden! Such a generous gift for ravishing Sarai, to woo her.

This anger was always with her and she questioned Fate. If she was second to Sarai, why had God opened her womb and made her the triumphant one who became pregnant immediately, while Sarai lived in sterile defeat? Why had God blessed her more bountifully than the legendary Sarai?

She stroked her body that was as fertile as the sunny land of Egypt, smiled upon by Isis, the Egyptian goddess of motherhood.

She placed her hands on her belly, caressing herself in small, circular motions and purring with a small smile as she took little, delicate dancing steps.

"Beautiful Sarai – barren and sterile, despairs her marriage is in peril" she sang.

Daily, Hagar walked a lonely mile along the dusty paths of the encampment.

She passed Sarai's dear friend, Tabora the noblewoman, in the courtyard, the geographical and social center of tribal life. In her loneliness, she stopped Tabora and greeted her warmly.

"Come visit with me this afternoon," she added.

"Thank you, Hagar, but I'm on my way right now to Sarai's tent."

"Come, walk with me a little while, Tabora."

"I don't want to insult Sarai by making her wait. She is always considerate of others."

"What makes her so remarkable in your eyes, Tabora? It didn't take her very long to teach me everything she knows!"

Several of the clanspeople stepped through their tent-flaps, eager to observe the impending drama.

"Sh, sh, Hagar, everyone hears you," Tabora whispered, grasping her by the forearm.

Fiercely, Hagar pulled away.

"Good," she shrieked. "Let the whole tribe listen! I hope all of Canaan hears me!" She cupped her hands around her mouth and faced the gaping tribesmen. "Clan of Abram, here my words! I hereby announce that Sarai is not at all remarkable as she seems!"

Tabora grasped her by the shoulders and pulled her around to face her.

"Be quiet, Hagar!" she said hotly. "Don't tread on Sarai's virtues!"

"If she is so virtuous, why does she suffer the worst

curse cast upon woman? A vacant womb! Why? Why has God made her childless?"

"Hold your viper's tongue! I order you to!"

"Be silent, be silent! Why will no one ever speak it? It is a punishment! A punishment from God!"

"I said hold your tongue!" Tabora shouted.

"Why don't you ask why God is punishing your wonderful Sarai? Why must I carry Abram's seed to continue his line? I am his second wife now. I am her equal!"

She thrust her pelvis forward and threw her arms out wide, vibrating her bulging belly in a wild dance of blatant pregnancy like Canaan had never seen. She sang and chanted as she twisted and circled awkwardly, heavily, all around the courtyard for everyone to see.

"Are you watching my son's first tribal dance?" she shouted to the observers.

But her smile was unnatural and forced. And her black eyes blazed wildly with unconcealed hatred and sadness.

Sarai stood behind her tentflap listening, ashen and trembling with fury. She pulled nervously at the neck of her tunic.

"Abram," she called, "why do you sit there? I know you hear her violent words, like spears."

"She carries a child for us. She is upset," he tried to soothe her. "We should not be listening."

She paced the length of the tent and back again.

"This is not the first time that she flaunts her hatred. The women have told me that she often disparages me. I have tried to ignore her to keep peace, but you heard her venom. How can you sit there and try to calm me? And do nothing to protect my name?"

His eyes offered her his sympathy.

"Abram. Please. Don't you see that Hagar now acts as a freewoman? Confirm her position. Tell her her rightful place."

"I cannot mark her as a slave to sell her," he answered. "She carries our son."

"Then it is you who wrong me," she said, counting out each word deliberately.

Abram winced.

"Sarai, you are the one who must deal with her. She is yours. She is subject to your authority," he said softly. "If she is to be punished, you, the mistress, must be the one to do it. It is a tribal law."

"Let your God judge between you and me," Sarai said, grabbing a shoe from the floor as she fled in disbelief.

Outside, leaning against the tent, her cheeks blazing, she held back tears of anger at his emotional desertion of her. She needed more loyalty from him than this.

He worries only about his unborn heir. And the pledge. Her good deeds and her sacrifices for him were only as a light rain on parched earth. She would handle this entire affair herself in accordance with tribal law.

Briskly, she walked in Hagar's direction, the spectators moving like silent shadows back into their tents.

Hagar bounded forward but Sarai held out her hand with the shoe, motioning for her to stop, leaving a few scant feet between them.

"I order you to leave ," she said, her lips barely moving, her vocal cords bulging in her neck. "Go away, away from here."

Hagar stood mute and rigid like a stone sculpture. She seemed not to breathe. Her eyes were fixed on Sarai's face flushed red with fury, something she had never seen before.

Sarai followed the tribal procedure and threw the shoe at Hagar to name her a slave, to reassert her possession.

Clumsily, Hagar ducked.

"Now get out to the scorching desert! Back into the wilderness where you belong, you bondwoman!" Sarai spit out the words as she pointed to the desert beyond.

Hagar's eyes grew wide and blank. Still, she stood frozen in fear.

"Back to your land of painted, green-eyed harlots! Find yourself a harem there! Go!"

Hagar was shaking beyond control.

"Go, bondwoman, with your bulging belly! Go where I cannot see you! I order you to go from here!"

Hagar fled.

The hot sand shooting up around her sandals burned her feet. She ran lightly for a woman so heavy with child and speedily as if pushed on by demons. Her body was aflame with anger; her face was hot with shame. Deeper into the wilderness she ran seeking to put out the fires that drove her on. Faster she ran, her hair flying in the wind cooling the back of her neck.

Like a madwoman she howled and shrieked as she leaped on the dunes in the sand. Back to your land, back to your land, she heard Sarai's voice repeating in its fury.

"God, how I hate her! I hate her, I despise her!" she screamed to the skies.

Breathlessly, she ran in the direction of her home, back toward her land, her fertile land of Egypt....

In despair, Hagar wanders in the desert until an angel of the Lord finds her asleep on the ground and tells her to return to her mistress, promising that she will bear a son, Ishmael. The angel predicts Ishmael will be a wild man, with everyone against him. Hagar returns to tell Abram the story and to give birth to his son.

God renews the covenant with Abram and renames them Abraham and Sarah. His predictions come true and Ishmael grows to be wild and arrogant, but Abraham is consumed with love for his heir who is skillful in hiding his unsocial behavior from his father.

Finally, the Lord takes note of Sarah and miraculously she bears a son, Isaac, for Abraham.

Their joy in Isaac is overwhelming; their life is as a watered garden. But Sarah sees how Ishmael shoots arrows at Isaac at his weaning celebration and stalks his younger brother when Abraham is not present. She implores Abraham to help shield Isaac by banishing Hagar and Ishmael. God affirms this request.

And Abraham takes some bread and a skin of water to give them to Hagar, and together with Ishmael sends her to wander in the wilderness of Beersheba. ❑

Marjorie Hirshan, *a retired school teacher, is a craftsperson and writer. "Sarah and Hagar" is excerpted from an as yet unpublished novella.*

new women's writing on ISRAEL

by Esther Cohen

Rina Drucker

Shimoni's Lover
by Jenifer Levin
New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
378 pp. $18.95

Winter in Jerusalem
by Blanche d'Alpuget
New York: Touchstone/
Simon & Schuster
269 pp. $6.95

Jerusalem, Jerusalem
by Lesley Hazleton
New York: Penguin
243 pp. $7.95

Enemy in the Promised Land
by Sana Hassan
New York: Pantheon
335 pp. $18.95

These four very different writers have written four strong and interesting books about Israel: a saga, a black comedy, a poet's portrait and an enemy's plea.

Shimoni's Lover by Jenifer Levin tells many stories at once: stories of Israeli men and the women around them, all living difficult lives. Their lives are impossible because of war, because of the inevitability of early death that comes with war, and because of the plague of heroism that haunts them from the time they can hold a gun. Levin portrays an Israel that's full of difficult tests, tests which are hard and often impossible. Shimoni, the book's dead hero, whose presence eerily underscores the novel, has his skin torn from his body in battle; Nadav, his younger brother, loses three fingers in war. Shimoni's lover Miriam has a psychotic daughter who shakes with unexplained rage.

One of Levin's main characters is an American woman named Josie who finds herself on kibbutz. Josie marries Rafi, Shimoni and Nadav's brother and a kibbutznik who is nearly bisexual: that is, he prefers men but has women on occasion. Rafi wants America and Josie wants love. Each believes the other is the key to escaping who they are, and what they know to be true. This theme recurs throughout the book.

Winter in Jerusalem by Blanche D'Alpuget is very funny, and books about Israel, like books about religion or sex, are rarely that. She tells the story of Danielle Green, a screenwriter asked to rewrite Masada for the movies, a la Ben Hur. Her Hollywood boss, Bennie Kidron, a Globus-Golan Israeli man, is always on the telephone in big hotels. He's both compelling and detestable. So is Danielle's father, a Jerusalem professor who abandoned his family years before. With terrorists, heroes, scholars, leftists, artists and priests, D'Alpuget creates a full, compelling picture of Jerusalem, a picture she feels drawn to describe. D'Alpuget voices a sentiment echoed in all these books in one way or another:

> *I found home-people half-asleep after Israel and I didn't feel like talking to them about what had happened to me there. I knew nobody who I thought would understand even as much of it as I did. I felt lost.*

So does Lesley Hazleton, a British journalist who went to Israel in 1966 for a two-week vacation and stayed there 13 years. Unable to stay forever, unable to leave for good either, Hazleton reluctantly left Israel in 1979. But she never felt at home anywhere else. She decides to make one last visit in 1984. Very clearly, Hazleton explains the impossible connection she feels:

> *As the moon moved above me that first night back at Mishkenot, Jerusalem seemed like a passionate love affair that had lasted beyond its time but would not break. Everything that pulled me toward it had a dark side that pushed me away. I knew this, but it was hard to remember that dark side on this night, as the lone dog still howled and a faint breeze rose, rustling the berries of the Persian lilac tree.*

Sana Hassan, an Egyptian journalist who grew up thinking of Jews as enemies, decided in a courageous and unusual gesture to see Zionism and Judaism up close. She went to Jerusalem too, planning to stay for just a few weeks, extending her stay several times until she felt she knew enough to leave. What she learned, she describes very movingly in *Enemy in the Promised Land*, her chronicle of her time there. Hassan disguises herself as a Jew. She works in factories, works on kibbutz, falls in love, and feels the intense pull of the state, a pull she finds hard to explain. This in spite of her sense of injustice, and the pain she sees all too often.

Read together, these four books form a unique narration of war and death, liberation, humor, oppression, betrayal and hope. The stories are told by an engaging female chorus, whose voices on Israel have been missing far too long. ❑

***Esther Cohen** is a novelist whose first book,* No Charge for Looking (Schocken) *is a portrait of Nazareth. She's the publisher of Adama Books in New York.*

Surrogacy in Jewish Law

(Continued from Page 20)

tion of human life by having one person ask another to place herself in unjustifiable physical danger, i.e. childbirth; and by opening the door to frivolous avoidance of natural childbirth by fertile women.

Rights of the Child: Through surrogacy the rights of the unborn child have been subordinated to the jurisdictional and emotional needs of the parents. Questions of concern to Jewish thinkers deal with identity formation and bonding, protection of babies unwanted by either parent, inheritance rights, and unforeseen problems which may jeopardize the child's fundamental rights.

Contract Legitimacy: *Halacha*, like American civil law, forbids commercial trade in human life, e.g. sale of organs, prostitution. However much discussion centers on the legitimacy of custody contracts, of vows which don't account for changes of heart, and of the validity of legally binding a woman to a gesture of altruism, such as having a baby for someone else.

The story of Sara and Hagar is often cited as the historical model for surrogate parenting. Despite many differences in circumstances – the status and rights offered Hagar, the absence of payment, the shared custody arrangement – the experiment failed. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned here.

***Arlene Agus** is assistant director of the Jewish Communal Affairs Department at the American Jewish Committee.*

KOL ISHAH

(Continued from Page 5)

MAZEL TOV

Caryn Adelman of Chicago, **Florence Eckstein** of Phoenix, and **Leah Siskin** of West Palm Beach, Florida were elected to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's Board of Directors.

Ann Bialkin, president of ELEM-America, an organization devoted to helping Israeli youth in distress, was presented with an award from the Israeli Government in recognition of her work.

Mathilda Brailove recalls the inception and development of the United Jewish Appeal over her forty years of involvement and service in "A Time to Remember," the UJA video which received the silver medal at the 30th annual International Film and Television Festival.

Gretel Ehrlich, author of "The Solace of Open Spaces," a collection of narrative essays, and **Deborah Eisenberg,** author of "Transactions in a Foreign Currency," a collection of short stories, received $25,000 awards for outstanding writing from the Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation.

Joelle Fefer of Toronto won the bronze medal in marksmanship in the recent Pan Am games in Indianapolis.

Erna I. Gans of Chicago, **Bobbie Greene Kilberg** of McLean, Virginia, **Sheila Johnson Robbins** of New York City and **Sheila Rabb Weidenfeld** of Washington, DC were among ten people sworn in as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Committee in November 1987.

E. Billie Ivry is the first woman elected trustee at Yeshiva University.

Claudia Koonz's *Mothers in the Fatherland (excerpted in LILITH #17)* was nominated for the National Book Award in 1987.

Harriet Kurlander has been named the director of the National Commission for Women's Equality of the American Jewish Congress. She is the first full-time director to deal exclusively with women's issues.

Dr. Rela Geffen Monson, professor of sociology at Gratz College, has been appointed the college's acting dean for academic affairs.

Susan Morgenstein has been named curator of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Actress **Liv Ullmann** received an honorary doctorate from the University of Haifa in October. University President Ephraim Evron, paid special attention to Ullmann's "public efforts on behalf of Soviet Jewry." Her most recent film, "Moscow Farewell," is loosely based on the life of former refusenik Ida Nudel.

Batya Washitz was the recipient of the Elwyn Institution's first Aliza Begin Humanitarian Award for advocacy on behalf of Israel's mentally retarded people.

Rabbi Sue Ann Wasserman has become Atlanta's first female rabbi when she joined the staff of The Temple.

JEWISH WOMAN FOUNDED UNITED WAY

Researchers planning United Way's centennial year celebration recently discovered that a Jewish woman from Denver was among the organization's founders.

Frances Wisebart Jacobs joined with four male religious leaders in 1887 to establish the first successful area-wide federated charitable organization. Jacobs served as secretary of the Charity Organization Society, which was the predecessor to United Way.

The Kentucky-born Jacobs had settled in Central City, Colorado in 1865. In addition to her work with the Charity Organization Society, she founded the first free kindergarten in Denver, was president of the Hebrew Benevolent Ladies Aid Society, was a lifetime officer of the Ladies Relief Society, and one of the founders of the National Jewish Hospital for tuberculosis patients.

In recognition of Jacobs' accomplishments, a movement is underway to issue a postage stamp commemorating her work and to record her name in the National Women's Hall of Fame.

– Reena Sigman Friedman

"GO AND SEE" OR "SEEK ENLIGHTENMENT" IS THE TITLE OF THE YIDDISH-LANGUAGE TORAH FOR WOMEN, WITH THE PORTION OF THE WEEK AND FOLK TALES. TSENA-RENA WAS THE FIRST RESOURCE THAT ENABLED WOMEN TO EDUCATE THEMSELVES.

TSENA RENA

PUBLICATIONS

"Mothers in the Workplace" is a national study of the **special needs of families in which mothers with young children work outside their homes.** The project is sponsored by the Center for the Child — a research Center founded by the National Council of Jewish Women. For information on how to obtain a copy of the study, contact:
NCJW, Center for the Child
15 East 26th Street
New York NY 10010

The National Conference on Service to Jewish Individuals with Disabilities took place in September 1987. Sponsored by the Council of Jewish Federations, highlights of the Conference included a keynote address on **responsibility to the disabled and small workshops and presentations on a range of subjects.** For proceedings of the conference write:
CJF
730 Broadway
New York NY 10003
(212) 475-5000

A plethora of materials is available from the National Women's History Project to support **multi-cultural women's history programs.** Send $1 for their illustrated catalog to:
P.O. Box 3716
Santa Rosa CA 95402
(707) 526-5974

Editor Elinor Fuchs' *Plays of the Holocaust: An International Anthology* contains a varied **collection of theater pieces that stress the collective catastrophe of the era,** rather than the suffering of an individual or a family. The anthology includes Nelly Sachs' "Eli: A Mystery Play of the Sufferings of Israel". It can be ordered from:
Publications Department
Theater Communications Group
355 Lexington Avenue
New York NY 10017
(212) 697-5230

"Jewish Foodways," a special issue of *Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Review*, includes **two articles by guest editor Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett:** "Recipes for Creating Community: The Jewish Charity Cookbook in America," and "Jewish Charity Cookbooks in the United States and Canada: A Bibliography of 201 Publications." It is available for $8 from:
Dr. Shalom Staub, Editor
Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Review
212 Montrose Street
Harrisburg PA 17110

The 1987-88 *Jewish Almanac*, which includes a **comprehensive listing of 16,000 Jewish resources in the U.S. and Canada, is available from:**
Pacific Press Inc.
295 Madison Avenue
Suite 1228
New York NY 10017

Between the Clouds and Heaven: A Plea from Refusenik Women has just been published by B'nai B'rith Women. It is **a plea for freedom by Jewish women refuseniks trapped in the Soviet Union.** Copies of the pamphlet are available free of charge from:
BBW/Program and Public Affairs Dept.
1640 Rhode Island Avenue NW
Washington DC 20036
(202) 857-6687

Coming Out, Coming Home: Lesbian and Gay Jews and the Jewish Community is a pamphlet available from:
New Jewish Agenda
64 Fulton Street #1100
New York NY 10003
(212) 227-5885

The 1987-88 edition of *Jewish Life on Campus*, **listing which colleges and universities have kosher food facilities, Hillel or other Jewish campus groups, Jewish studies courses and majors,** has been published by:
B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation
1640 Rhode Island Avenue NW
Washington DC 20036

AUDIO/VIDEO

"Yiddish Songs of the Holocaust: The Struggle to Survive," a lecture-recital by folklorist Ruth Rubin, is available on audio cassette. The narrative is in English and the songs are in

Yiddish; included are a selection of **13 songs, and excerpts of poetry and diary entries from the Holocaust years.** The cost per cassette is $10 plus $2 postage.
Sinister Wisdom Books
P.O. Box 308
Montpelier VT 05602

The American Jewish Committee has published "Shabbat Delight," **a multi-media kit designed to help young children learn the rituals and meaning of the Sabbath.** For more information, contact:
AJC
165 East 56 Street
New York NY 10022
(212) 751-4000

The Board of Jewish Education has made available **a new cassette and songbook for young children and their families entitled "Because We Love Shabbat."** The music and accompanying book enable families to capture the spirit of the day through songs, stories and activities. Write to:
Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York
426 West 58th Street
New York NY 10019

The Last to Know is a 45 minute **film on women alcoholics,** including the story of a middle-class Jewish woman victim of the double denial that Jewish women aren't alcoholics.
Phoenix Films
468 Park Avenue South
New York NY 10016

GROUPS AND PROJECTS

There are currently **women's *tefillah* (prayer) groups** meeting in the Flatbush, Washington Heights and Riverdale sections of New York City, in Great Neck NY, in Wilmington DE and elsewhere. For more information, contact:
Women's Tefillah Network
P.O. Box 300236
Brooklyn NY 11230-0004

The Disabled Artists Network is **an information exchange of disabled artists in the visual and sculptural arts.** Services include introducing artists to one another, information about opportunities available, as well as about shows, competitions, galleries, and services for professional artists who are disabled. Send a SASE (or a cassette for those who are print or visually handicapped) to:
Disabled Artists Network
P.O. Box 20781
New York NY 10025

Photographer Lea Treitmen is making a series of **portraits of Jewish women in their home environments.** The series intends to portray the diversity of lifestyles of Jewish women in today's world. If you are interested in participating, phone (212) 795-9635.

Roots of Jewish Feminism, devised by Lea-Beth Novick, is an educational program for women and men that **focuses on the lives and accomplishments of Jewish heroines.** The joys and struggles of women from biblical to modern times, are presented in terms of their application to contemporary issues. For bookings, contact:
Pati McDermott
(415) 652-6355

EMILY'S List (EMILY stands for "Early Money is Like Yeast") is a donor network founded in 1985. By 1986 it had grown to **a network of 1,200 political venture capitalists committed to raising early money for Democratic women candidates.** Members pay $100 to join EMILY'S List, and in addition pledge to donate $100 to $1,000 to two or three candidates recommended by EMILY'S List. The organization is committed to giving money to viable candidates early in the campaign season, so that they can use those funds to leverage other contributions. To find out more about membership, write:
EMILY'S List
2000 P Street NW Suite 410
Washington DC 20036
(202) 887-5697

CALLS FOR MATERIALS

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is now seeking the participation of survivors and liberators or their heirs to ensure that the permanent exhibit is as accurate as possible. The museum needs to be made aware of **original documents, artifacts, letters, diaries, and photographs that were created in the camps, in ghettos, or in hiding.** Send your name, address, and telephone number, along with a description of the object, listing the manufacturer, contents, and physical properties.
Benjamin Mead, Chairman Content Committee
U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum
1050 Connecticut Avenue NW
Suite 1150
Washington DC 20036

Poets are invited to submit their work for consideration for **"A Sampler of Jewish Women's Poems," a project of the Jewish Women's Resource Center. Include SASE.**
National Council of Jewish Women
9 East 69th Street
New York NY 10021
(212) 535-5900

Tsena Rena *was compiled and written by Elizabeth Lichtenstein.*

Detail of "American Herstory, Mystory, Ourstory" by Sanda Aronson, a disabled artist

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Should we have more kids? When a Jewish wife becomes a widow. Surviving single. Mothers/daughters.
Our Minds/Our bodies
What we think of ourselves: our achievements and goals, our hair, our noses, our fat.
Women and the Holocaust
History plus first-hand accounts of women in the ghettos, the camps, and the Resistance, and the roles played by women in Israel and North America.

Volunteerism
The great debate. What would happen to the Jewish community if women withdrew their service?
Jewish Women and Power
Who has it, who reflects it. Do we want more power? Is power beautiful?
In the Arts
The Jewish woman as subject and object. Who's who among Jewish women artists, writers, film-makers, performers. And how we've been portrayed/betrayed in novels and movies.

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